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Version: Version of Record

Link(s) to article on publisher's website:

<http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21954/ou.ro.0000d11d>

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Teacher Autonomy in Turkish State Lower Secondary Schools With Reference to English Language Teaching: A Mixed Methods Study

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Thesis submitted to The Open University in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The Centre for Research in Education and Educational Technology
(CREET)

The Open University

May, 2017

Declaration

I declare that this thesis represents my own work, except where due acknowledgment is made, and that it has not been previously submitted to the Open University or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualification.

Publication arising from this work

Khalil, Betul (2015). Thinking together? Teacher autonomy, collaboration and professional development in Turkish lower secondary schools. In: ATEE 40th Annual Conference: Teacher Education Through Partnership and Collaborative Learning Communities (Livingston, Kay and Macfarlane, Gaele eds.), ATEE (Association for Teacher Education in Europe), Brussels pp. 32–42.

Abstract

Teacher autonomy has long been a topic of great interest in the field of applied linguistics for language learning and teaching. However, the research to date on the subject has been mostly restricted to the exercise of autonomy by teachers within their classrooms. Schools are large social organisations and language teachers are active participants in these organisations. They undertake a number of roles and responsibilities within their work contexts. Therefore, we need to extend our scrutiny of language teachers' exercise of autonomy to encompass not only their teaching practice in the classroom but also their wider organizational roles.

Adopting just such a broader approach, this research examines the concept of teacher autonomy in Turkish state lower secondary schools with reference to English language teaching. The aims of this study are to explore how teacher autonomy is understood in an institution-wide context and how it is exercised in relation to four areas of teacher activity: teaching and assessment, school management, professional development and curriculum development. My purpose is to uncover the deep structures that shape understandings and the exercise of teacher autonomy.

To investigate the emergence of teacher autonomy, this study draws upon the critical realism approach developed by Roy Bhaskar, applying his transformational model of the connection between social structure and agency. Taking a mixed methods approach, it relies on a range of data sources including documents, a questionnaire, observations and interviews with Turkish teachers of English, head teachers and educational administrators.

The research revealed that teacher autonomy was a meaningful concept within the Turkish education system and was exercised in varying degrees in relation to all four areas of teacher activity. A complex interplay between structure and agency underpinned the emergence of teacher autonomy. The understanding and exercise of teacher autonomy were shaped by the geopolitical context, compliance and accountability, trust, school culture, and teacher collegiality mechanisms. The outcomes of this research have implications for our understanding of teacher autonomy in the field of applied linguistics and for improving the quality of English language teaching in Turkey.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my deepest thanks to my supervisors, Dr Timothy Lewis and Dr Uwe Baumann for their support, patience, encouragement and for all their careful reading. To both of you, I can never thank you enough.

All teachers, head teachers and educational administrators who participated in this study, thank you so much for your time.

I acknowledge Professor Catriona Mackenzie of Macquarie University, Australia and Dr Hakki Öztürk of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Turkey for taking the time to answer all my questions about autonomy in the early stages of this PhD research study.

I am indebted to Dr John Oates for his support during the difficult times and listening to me. I would also like to thank Anne Foward in the student administrative team for her help and support during my time at the Open University.

My warm thanks to my PhD colleagues, Sarah Jane Mukherjee, Linda Plowright and Subhi Ashour, in particular for their support and friendship.

I owe my gratitude to my family for their support and to my eight years old daughter, Rayann, for her unconditional love and patience. I dedicate this thesis to her.

Finally, I would like to thank the Open University for funding my PhD and making this project possible.

List of Abbreviations

CEFR	The Common European Framework of Reference
EARGED	The Department of National Educational Research and Development of
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
EPI	English Proficiency Index
EU	European Union
INGED	The English Language Teachers' Association
KPSS	The State Personnel Examination
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PISA	The Programme for International Student Assessment
SDT	Self-determination theory
TEOG	High School Entrance Exam
TEPAV	The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TPCLP	The Teaching Career Ladder Programme
TWA	Teacher Work Autonomy Scale

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1 Introduction

This is a study of teacher autonomy in the context of Turkish state lower secondary schools. In this introductory chapter, first, brief background information is given (Section 1.1). Second, the rationale for the study is described, including an explanation of how I developed an interest in this concept (Section 1.2). Third, the research aims, scope and questions are presented (Section 1.3). Finally, a brief outline of the structure of the thesis chapter by chapter is given (Section 1.4).

1.1 Background

In 2012, the president of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, announced the Justice and Development Party's 2023 Vision Strategy, which aims to position Turkey as one of the top ten global economies by 2023. One of the aims of the 2023 Vision Strategy is to improve the quality of education by 2023 by (a) promoting the idea of people-oriented management in schools, which values a participatory approach; (b) restructuring teacher education programmes, (c) improving the skills and competencies of school head teachers, ensuring that schools contribute to improving the local context within which they operate, (d) undertaking curricular reforms, (d) improving the quality of educational materials, (e) developing an assessment system in line with students' developmental needs and (f) improving the quality of physical and financial support to schools. Since the announcement of the 2023 Vision Strategy, a number of changes have taken place in the education system. These include the implementation of the 12 years compulsory education programme (commonly known as the 4+4+4 law), award ceremonies for innovation in education, a new centralised assessment system for lower secondary schools,

the announcement of a democratisation package and the implementation of a quality management system.

While these changes continue to take place, English language learning is still a problem for the country. In order to make progress in the globalised world and fulfil the aims of the 2023 Vision Strategy, it is important for Turkey to have citizens competent in speaking the English language, citizens who can ‘communicate effectively on an international level’ (MoNE, 2012a, p.2). A famous Turkish comedian jokes in one of his shows that a Turk knows only enough English to express his or her problem to an English speaking person and that problem is that they cannot speak English. Similarly, according to a report published by the Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV) as an outcome of a collaboration with the British Council, more than 95% of students cannot speak or respond to slowly-spoken English, towards the end of their high school education in state schools across Turkey, despite nearly 1000 English class hours having been delivered since their primary school education:

A diligent student might understand where s/he needs to write ‘the present perfect tense’ in a textbook/exam exercise, but she cannot say: ‘I’ve left my English book at home’, or ask a friend: ‘Have you brought your English book? Can I borrow it?’ (TEPAV, 2014, p.72)

Turkey’s English language deficit is also documented in the 2015 and 2016 English proficiency Index (EPI), conducted by English First – an educational company which specialises in language training. EPI ranked Turkey in the very low proficiency band, 50th out of 70 countries in 2015 and 51st out of 72 in 2016.

The reasons behind the problem of learning English in Turkey have been widely discussed, both in the media and in scholarly circles. In the TEPAV report, for instance, a number of these problems have been listed: teaching of English as a content-based subject, teacher-centric classroom practice, classroom layout which does not support pair or group work, textbooks and curricula failing to take account of the varying levels and needs of students, and the repetition of similar curricula from grade to grade. It appears that we are very well acquainted with the reasons behind Turkish students' failure to learn English and the classroom practice of Turkish teachers of English. However, we do not know much about who actually these teachers are and it is argued in this thesis that this should be the starting point for understanding low student performance in learning English. English teachers are participants in large social organisations (i.e. schools). They do not work in isolation in classrooms. Like other teachers, they are subject to all the changes that have been taking place in Turkey. Hence, in order to understand them, it is important to focus on what is happening outside the classroom as well as inside and examine English teachers as active participants of schools. This PhD study is an attempt to understand Turkish teachers of English through an investigation of their autonomy, both in and outside the classroom.

The study aims to make a contribution to improving the quality of English teaching because autonomy is a psychological need and when it is undermined, a decline in performance is inevitable (Ryan and Deci, 2006). When people's autonomy is supported, this facilitates their attachment to their work and improves their well-being. Thus, autonomy is important for promoting better work performance and better adjustment (Deci and Ryan, 2014). Furthermore, a considerable amount of the relevant literature published on teacher autonomy (e.g. Coladarci, 1992;

Friedman, 1999; Brunetti, 2001; Moomaw, 2005; Pearson and Moomaw, 2005; Öztürk, 2011; and Sarafidou and Chatziioannidis, 2013; Ayrar *et al.*, 2014) suggests that it is important to enhance teachers' autonomy, because encouraging and strengthening the power of teachers in the personal and professional sense can improve teaching quality and help teachers cope with changes within the education system. There is a general agreement in these studies that by enhancing teacher autonomy the quality of education will be improved since it increases student achievement and motivation and enhances teachers' job satisfaction, professionalism and empowers teachers.

1.2 Rationale

My interest in teacher autonomy stems from research I undertook on the concept of learner autonomy as part of a Master of Research in Education programme in 2013 at the Open University. One of the major findings of this study was that English teachers¹ felt comfortable with the traditional style of teaching and viewed themselves as transmitters of knowledge who held all the responsibility for learning. When examined together with the rest of the findings, this raised the question of what teacher autonomy meant to them. Notwithstanding that approaches to teacher autonomy have varied (Wilches, 2007; Smith and Erdoğan, 2008; La Ganza, 2008; Raya and Vieira, 2015), a predominant thread in the discussion about teacher autonomy in relation to language teachers is the idea that teachers who are

¹ In the rest of this thesis, 'English teachers' will be used interchangeably with 'Turkish teachers of English.'

themselves autonomous may have a positive influence on the development of autonomy in their students (Little, 1995; Balçıkanlı 2009). In these studies, the notion of teacher autonomy is usually used as a professional attribute, parallel to the concept of learner autonomy. In other words, the extent to which teachers are able to foster learner autonomy in their classrooms is regarded as an indicator of their own autonomy.

This kind of view of teacher autonomy ignores the fact that the role of teachers – including teachers of English in today's schools – is not limited to the classroom or their subject areas. Language teachers are part of large social organisations (i.e. schools) and they will carry out a number of other duties and take on additional responsibilities within schools, as other teachers do. It therefore makes little sense to limit an examination of language teacher autonomy to the exercise of discretion or freedom only within the classroom, in relation to the choice of language teaching methods, content, or sources.

Teacher autonomy as a broad concept as approached in this study has been investigated by many scholars in relation to teachers outside the field of English language teaching and learning (e.g. Friedman, 1999; Moomaw, 2005, Gwaltney, 2012, Sparks, 2012). The interrelation between teacher autonomy and various constructs, such as motivation, job satisfaction, stress and burnout, professionalism, and empowerment, has been demonstrated (e.g. Coladarci, 1992, Brunetti, 2001, Moomaw, 2005). In these studies autonomy appears to have emerged as an important factor in what teachers need in order to remain committed to their profession (Brunetti, 2001; Öztürk 2011). Although numerous studies have been undertaken in other parts of the world, there has been little discussion about it in the

Turkish context. To date, there are only three studies on teacher autonomy – as a multidimensional concept – by Öztürk (2011, 2012) and Ulas and Aksu (2015) with reference to history and classroom teachers. Thus, there is a need for an exploration of the concept of teacher autonomy within the educational system of this country particularly in the area of English language teaching (ELT).

1.3 Research aims, scope and questions

This PhD study seeks to explore the concept of teacher autonomy in relation to Turkish teachers of English in the context of Turkish state lower secondary schools. The research sought responses to the following three research questions:

1. How is teacher autonomy understood in Turkish state lower secondary schools with reference to English Language Teaching?
2. According to Turkish teachers of English, head teachers and educational administrators, how does teacher autonomy emerge in these schools, in relation to:
 - a) Teaching and assessment;
 - b) School management;
 - c) Professional development;
 - d) Curriculum development?
3. What are the mechanisms that shape the understandings and exercise of teacher autonomy in the context of Turkish state lower secondary schools with reference to English Language Teaching?

The first research question explores how teacher autonomy is understood in Turkey. In order to answer this research question, a broad range of documents, including policy papers were analysed, and interviews with Turkish teachers of English, head teachers and educational administrators were conducted. The second research question deals with the emergence of teacher autonomy in relation to four areas of teacher activity: teaching and assessment, school management, professional development and curriculum development. This question is based on the assumption that English teachers are part of the school community and responsible for many other duties in addition to their work in the classroom. Finally, the third research question explores the mechanisms that shape teachers' exercise of autonomy in Turkish state lower secondary schools with reference to English language teaching. These are the deep structures that cause things to happen.

1.4 Organisation of the thesis

This thesis is made up of six chapters.

In this chapter, information about the background and the rationale to the study have been provided, together with an outline of the development of my interest in the concept of teacher autonomy. The aims and scope of the study have been described. This section shows how the thesis will proceed chapter by chapter.

Following this chapter, Chapter 2 provides a context to the study by giving some information about the Turkish education system including its aims and structures. The chapter also provides a brief introduction to English language teaching in Turkey and summarizes the most recent changes implemented in the country. The

process of becoming a teacher, the status of teachers and the issue of teacher quality in Turkey are also considered.

Chapter 3 explores the concept of autonomy from philosophical, psychological and sociological perspectives in order to better understand the concept in relation to teachers. This chapter also identifies the key activities of teachers in schools drawing on teacher work life studies. The concept of teacher autonomy is then examined both in and beyond the field of language learning and teaching, and including the factors that might influence the exercise of autonomy by teachers. The chapter identifies the gaps in the literature and re-presents the research questions. A critical realist model adopted in this study to understand teacher autonomy is discussed at the end of Chapter 3.

Chapter 4 engages with methodology and begins by introducing critical realism as the paradigm that informs the study and describing the ontological and epistemological premises of the project. The study uses mixed methods and the reasons for adopting this approach are explained in this chapter. The chapter includes a detailed account of the methods used in the project including the advantages and disadvantages as well as the rationale for doing so. Chapter 4 also discusses the issues of reliability, validity and generalizability, highlights the ethical considerations and concludes with the presentation of the data analysis procedures.

Chapter 5 presents the findings of the study. The chapter begins by reporting the survey study findings and then moves on to presenting the findings obtained from the document analysis, observation and interview study. It is organized around the themes deriving from the study.

Chapter 6 draws on the findings presented in Chapter 5 and discusses them in the light of the literature and of the critical realist model adopted in the study. This chapter is organized around the research questions. It concludes the thesis by discussing the contributions of the study, its limitations and recommendations for further research. My reflection on the study is given at the end.

2 Context of the study

2.1 Introduction

This chapter gives some information about the Turkish education system to provide a context for the study. This includes a brief introduction to the education system (Section 2.2) in Turkey since the foundation of the Republic in 1923, including its aims and structure. Looking at the education system starting from the early days of the Republic of Turkey is important as the main educational laws introduced in those days are still in effect. Section 2.3 provides a brief introduction to ELT in Turkey and reviews the most major changes that have been implemented in the country recently including the 1990s and the 1997 curriculum reform, the curricular and structural changes between 2000-2010, and in 2010 and onwards. The most recent changes that took place in the education system after the data analysis for this PhD study was completed are also incorporated to Section 2.3. Section 2.4 discusses the teaching profession in Turkey including the process of becoming a teacher, the status of teachers and the issue of teacher quality in the country. Section 2.5 concludes the chapter.

2.2 A brief introduction to the Turkish education system

Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Republic of Turkey was founded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1923. Atatürk's main aim was to build a modern and secularized Turkey, which could take its place among the world's developed countries. He saw national education activities and teachers in particular as the key to fulfilling this aim:

Teachers! The new generation will be your creation. The republic needs and wants guardians who are physically, intellectually and spiritually strong and our most important duty is to win a victory in the field of education.

Öğretmenler; yeni nesli Cumhuriyetin fedakâr öğretmen ve eğitimcileri sizler yetiştireceksiniz, yeni nesil, sizin eseriniz olacaktır. Cumhuriyet: fikren, ilmen, fennen, bedenen kuvvetli ve yüksek karakterli muhafızlar ister ve bizim en mühim görevimiz eğitim alanında zafer kazanmaktır.

Teachers Association Congress, 25 August 1924

In the early days of the Republic, Atatürk carried out various educational reforms in four areas: Unification of education, organization of education, modification in the quality of education and the expansion of education (MoNE, 2005a). On 3 March 1924, for example, the Law on Unification of Educational Instruction was enacted. With this law, the Turkish education system was centralised. This was a very important step for the country because in those days three different educational institutions existed which adopted different worldviews and belonged to three different historical periods. These were:

- 🌐 Local schools such as Sibyan schools, dervish lodges, dergahs which were attached to the mosques and Madrasahs in which both religious and scientific knowledge were taught until the Tanzimat era;
- 🌐 The Tanzimat era schools which were established during a series of reforms undertaken in the Ottoman Empire by Sultan Abdülmecit in the 19th century for Westernization;

- ✚ Colleges and minority schools (Çetin and Gülseren, 2003 and Nohl *et al.*, 2008).

The Law on the Unification of Educational Instruction is considered the first step taken toward democratizing the education system and putting secularism into practice in schools (MoNE, 2005a). With this law, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) was given control of all educational institutions. Thereafter, the Educational Organization Law no. 789 of the year 1926 ensured that no school in the country could be opened without the permission of MoNE (MoNE, 2005a). These laws are still in effect today and form the basis for all other educational laws. This means that Turkey still maintains its centralised educational structure which originated in 1924 (OECD, 2013). MoNE is responsible for all educational activities for each school in the system (MoNE, 2005a). It plans, programs, implements, monitors and controls education and training services targeted at teachers and students in educational institutions at all levels (MoNE, 2005a). Teachers perform their duties in conformity with the objectives and principles of MoNE, teach the same curriculum nationwide and use the textbooks distributed by MoNE (MoNE, 2012a).

In addition, MoNE is responsible for appointing, assigning, disciplining and dismissing both head teachers and teachers (MoNE, 2011b). It also allocates money for construction, educational materials, equipment and the operation of all schools (MoNE, 2011b). In short, MoNE is responsible for the whole education system on behalf of the state, and the general directorates and their units are responsible for different aspects of education and policy compliance (MoNE, 2005a). Figure 1 (Source: OECD, 2013) contains the organization chart of MoNE:

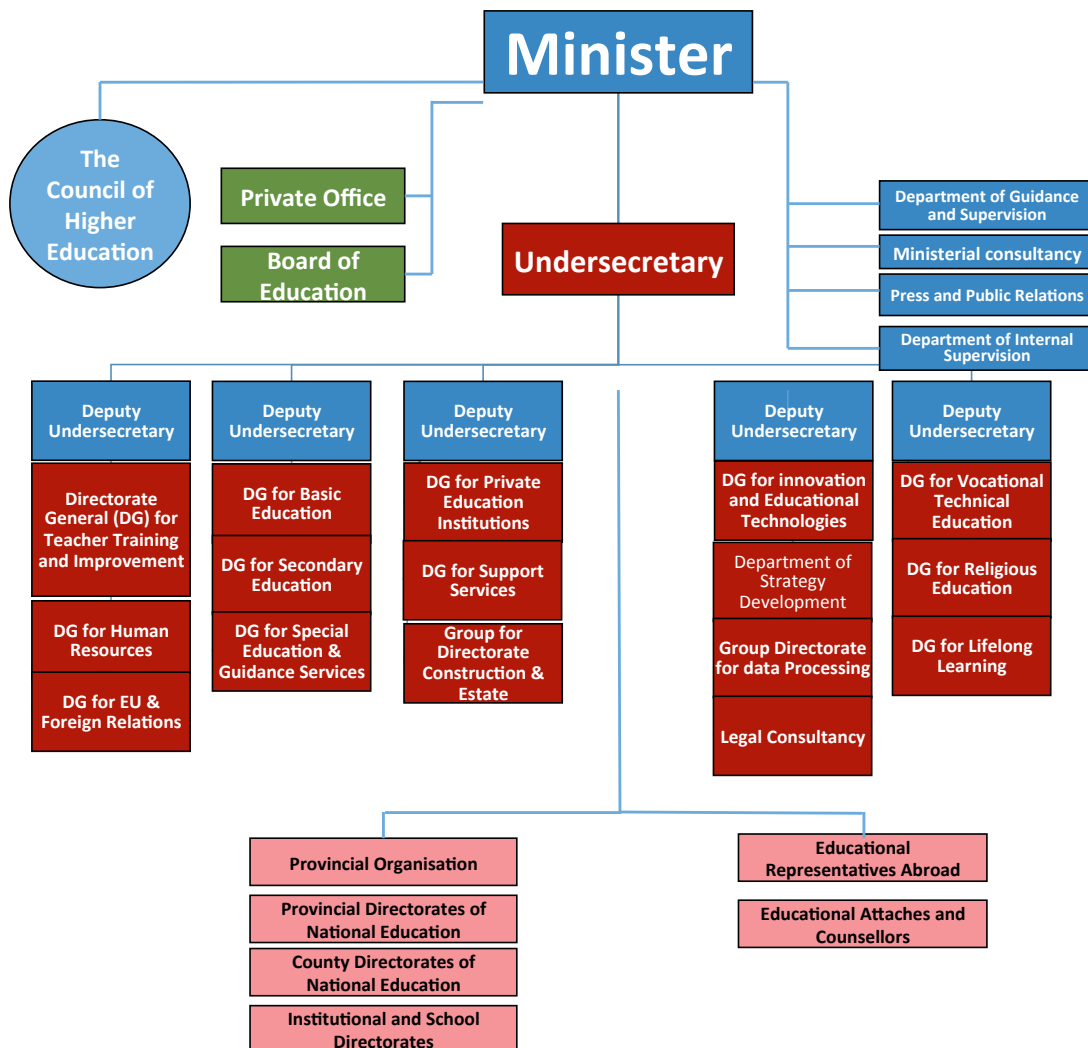


Figure 1 Organisation chart of MoNE

81 provincial and 850 district national education directorates across Turkey support the implementation of educational policy (OECD, 2013). Each province has its own directorate of national education and the district national education directorates in each province are responsible for supporting the provincial directorates.

There are two advisory bodies to MoNE. The first of these is the Council of National Education. It is the highest consultative body of MoNE, which was first established during the early days of the Republic by Atatürk under the name of the Commission

of Wise Men (MoNE, 2014a). The purpose of the Council is to examine issues concerning the education system in order to optimise quality. The Council of National Education is held every four years and includes participants from many social sectors including civil organisations, universities, and the media. A limited number of teachers, head teachers, and student and parent representatives are also invited to these meetings (MoNE, 2014a). The decisions taken by the representatives of different sections of society are published by MoNE in the Official Bulletin and implemented after approval by the relevant authorities within MoNE.

The Board of National Education is the second advisory body of MoNE. It was established by Atatürk in 1926 (MoNE, 2005a). It works very closely with the Minister of National Education and provides advice on almost every matter pertaining to education. Some of the responsibilities of the Board of Education, for example, are to undertake research, prepare and evaluate educational plans and curriculum as well as educational materials including textbooks, to determine performance standards for the teachers, to work actively for the Council of National Education and play a part in determining its agenda (MoNE, 2012c). In the next section, the aims and structure of the Turkish education system is introduced.

Aims and Structure of the Turkish education system

The Turkish education system, according to the Basic Law for National Education no. 1739 aims to raise individuals who are committed to Atatürk's reforms and principles, to promote the welfare and happiness of Turkish society, to support and accelerate economic, cultural and social development and, finally, to make the

Turkish nation a constructive, creative and distinguished contributor to contemporary civilization (MoNE, 1973).

The education system espouses democratic principles such as equality, the right to education, the needs of individuals and society, and a cooperation between school and family as its base (MoNE, 2001a; MoNE, 2005a). In addition to these general aims and principles, specific goals are determined for the educational institutions of different types and levels. The Turkish education system consists of two main divisions: Formal and Informal Education. The latter is outside the scope of this study. Therefore, I will provide brief information about the former throughout this section. Formal education is divided into five levels: kindergarten/nursery class, primary school, lower secondary school, high school, and university (Figure 2, Source: OECD, 2013).

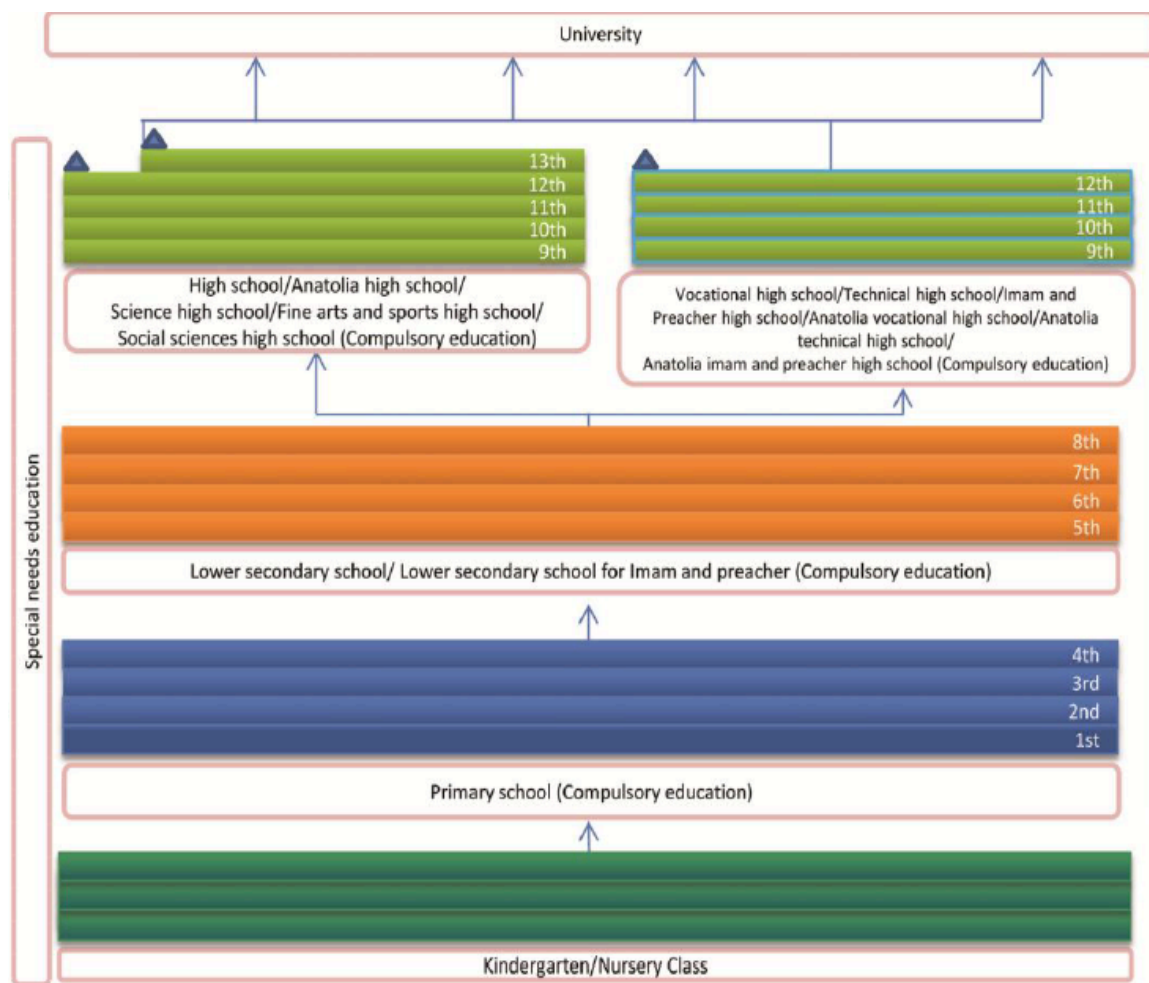


Figure 2 The five levels of formal education in Turkey

Nursery Class covers the education of infants from 48-66 months old. It aims to prepare children for primary education (MoNE, 2014b) which begins at the age of 6 or as soon as the child is over 66 months, depending on the parents' decision. Primary school covers the education of children until the age of 9. Lower secondary school institutions cover Years 5, 6, 7 and 8 (ages 9-12). The performance of students in a centralised exam (TEOG) during Year 8 determines the type of high school they can gain admission to. High school education is normally for four years and falls into two divisions. Students spend their first year studying common compulsory courses such as Science, Biology, Mathematics, History, Turkish

Literature and English. At the end of their first year, students then begin a new phase and take specialized courses depending on which field of study they want to pursue further. The divisions include (a) Natural Sciences (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Mathematics), (b) Social Sciences, (c) Turkish & Mathematics and (d) Foreign Languages.

After completing study at one of the high schools presented above, students obtain the qualification for university entrance at the age of 17-18. However, they still have to pass a centralised university entrance exam in order to gain admission. If they are successful in this exam, then they can only choose to study in university departments pertaining to the type of divisions they studied during their high school education. A student whose choice of division was Foreign Languages, for example, cannot choose to study in a university programme related to Natural Sciences (e.g. engineering, finance, or biology) and his/her option is limited to Foreign Languages. Among the levels illustrated above, the primary and lower secondary school levels have been subject to frequent changes in recent years, which I will be discussing in the following sections after providing a brief introduction to ELT in Turkey.

2.3 ELT in Turkey and the most recent changes in the education system

Turkey's long-stalled European accession process makes the learning of English, the main language for international communication and the world's lingua franca of science, technology and business, particularly important for Turkish citizens (Karahan, 2007). The significance of learning English is well stated in the recent English curriculum programme for lower secondary schools:

There is no question that the key to economic, political and social progress in today's society depends on the ability of Turkey's citizens to communicate effectively on an international level, and competence in English is a key factor in this process (MoNE, 2013a, p.2).

However, the level of English language proficiency is very low in Turkey, as previously mentioned in Chapter 1. In a study undertaken by the British Council and the Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV, 2014, pp. 24-25) to analyse the current state of English language teaching and learning, this is explained as follows:

Turkey is yet to catch up with competitor economies in its level of English language proficiency. Turkey consistently ranks very low on various measures of English language speaking. For example, the 2011 English Proficiency Index (EPI) developed by English First puts Turkey 43rd out of 44 countries. In the 2012 EPI, Turkey may appear to have improved its ranking to 32nd but the two years' rankings are not comparable due to

methodological changes and the fact that 12 countries were added to the rankings during the intervening year. In 2012, the average total Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of both native Turkish speakers and residents of Turkey was 75 over 120, similar to countries which do not have a Latin alphabet, such as Sudan and Ethiopia.

In recent years, many curricular and structural changes have taken place in the Turkish education system. In order to present a concise overview of these changes, I will concentrate on the last three decades. I will begin with the National Education Development Project, which was launched in 1990 and will continue with the 1997 curriculum reform. This will include changes in the field of ELT, which provide the context for my research. I will then move on to the structural and curricular changes that were made between 2000 and 2010. Finally, I will look at the changes made to the education system over the last 5 years including those that have affected the working lives of teachers.

The 1990s and the 1997 curriculum reform

The 1990s witnessed many changes, which began with the National Education Development Project supported by the World Bank. The purpose of the project was to underpin the government's efforts to improve student learning and achievement throughout the country. It focused on three areas: improving the effectiveness of management and administration, the quality of primary and secondary education, and teacher training (World Bank, 2000). This project can be regarded as a very important step in the history of the Turkish education system for several reasons. First, it suggested transferring some aspects of basic planning and decision-making

from MoNE to the provincial education directorates. This was a step towards decentralising the education system. Second, in accordance with the objectives of the National Education Project, a new curriculum was developed by the Department of National Educational Research and Development (EARGED) in 1993.

In 1994, MoNE started Curriculum Laboratory Schools. These were the schools where MoNE piloted educational programmes that were in development before implementing them across the country². Following this, MoNE introduced the Provincial National Education Directorates Commission of Programme Development in the 2425th Official Bulletin in 1995 (MoNE, 1995b). With the directive passed in the same year, the provincial national education directorates were given the right to carry out programme development. By doing so, the aim of MoNE was to increase cooperation between MoNE and its directorates and to meet the needs of society and individuals (MoNE, 1997). The curriculum development commissions initially were piloted in 6 district directorates in Ankara. Before the piloting process was completed, MoNE made the decision to implement it nationwide (Gözütok, 2003). The reasons behind MoNE's decision seem to have remained unexplained. However, this coincides with a study undertaken by the Turkish Educational Research and Development Directorate (MoNE, 1997) in which nationwide implementation was strongly recommended in order to meet local needs.

² This innovation however was abandoned in 2011 by Chair's Approval no. 82202 along with 53 other directives and 2593 notices as part of a project undertaken to reduce the amount of legislations in the system as there was no possibility of continuing the project.

Following this, the Turkish education system witnessed a curriculum reform in 1997. The 1997 reform is important for several reasons. First of all, until 1997, the education system consisted of five-years of primary, three-years of lower-secondary, and three-years of high school education. With the curriculum reform, primary and lower-secondary education were integrated into a single stream which aimed to extend the duration of compulsory primary education from the previous five to eight years. Second, as a consequence of this reform, students in Grades 4 and 5 of primary schools began to learn English. This meant a shift in the teaching of the English language from lower-secondary to primary schools, thus providing a longer exposure to English; the most widely taught foreign language in the country (Kırkgöz, 2005). The 1997 curriculum is seen as a landmark in Turkish educational history by some scholars (e.g. Kırkgöz, 2005) on the grounds that it introduced the concept of the communicative approach to ELT in Turkey for the first time and promoted learner-centred learning to replace the traditional teacher-centred view of learning. The 1997 curriculum reform was implemented two decades ago. Unfortunately, my extensive search has demonstrated that it is not possible to gain access the curriculum documentation today. I made two official applications to MoNE, but have not been able to access the information. However, a paper published the same year by a scholar from Boğaziçi University (Haznedar, 1997) criticises it as being behaviorist and gives examples from the English teaching curriculum, which seem to prove the claim. This is an important point because the traditional approach adopted in the 1997 curriculum was used as a justification for the current government to embark on a new curriculum development programme in 2005, which I will discuss later in the next sub-section.

Curricular and structural changes between 2000 and 2010

The education system has gone through many further changes. Some of these coincided with the beginning of negotiations on accession to the European Union (EU). In 2001, the EU established an accession partnership with Turkey when the Democratic Left Party was in power. All candidate countries for accession are obliged to accept the Community *acquis*. For that reason, a national plan for the adaptation to the Community *acquis* was developed when the Justice and Development Party came into power in 2002. The plan aimed to pursue several administrative reforms. One of the first reforms designed by the government was the Law on Fundamental Principles and Reform of Public Administration. With this law, the government aimed to restructure public administration, including services such as health, education, culture, and environment and to give more roles and responsibilities to local authorities. However, this raised strong opposition in the country, which mainly involved political figures. Some objected that the proposed law endangered the unity and wholeness of the state; others labelled it a product of neoliberalism (Bayraktar and Massicard, 2012). Following these debates, the erstwhile President of the Republic, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, vetoed the law. The discussion has sparked another debate about the decentralisation of the Turkish education system. This is still a very fierce debate in the country at the time of writing this thesis.

Subsequently, some other significant changes were introduced to the education system. In 2003, for example, the government passed a new law, which gave MoNE the right to choose, buy and distribute textbooks free of charge. This covered all students in compulsory education in the academic years 2003 and 2004. In the

same year, for the first time Turkey took part in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) conducted in 41 countries by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 250,000 15-year-old-students were assessed for problem-solving, science and reading abilities. Turkey performed very poorly in PISA and put in the second worst performance, just ahead of Mexico.

In 2004, the directive for Democracy Education and School Assembly was published in the Official Bulletin numbered 2588³ (MoNE, 2004). This directive led to the establishment of assemblies in schools across Turkey. The aims of these assemblies included developing a democratic culture in schools, encouraging pupils to participate, and adopting democratic leadership. Another prominent change that was made in this period was the redesign of the 1997 curriculum. MoNE used the poor PISA 2003 result to justify the curriculum change. However, it should be pointed out that the curriculum reform was already one of the aims the government set out in the emergency plan issued in 2002. The new curriculum was piloted in 2004 and implemented nationwide for all school subjects in 2005. MoNE saw the new curriculum as a move from the teacher-centred didactic model, which it claimed had dominated the previous curriculum programme, to a learner-centred constructivist model.

In the same year, ELT policy was also redesigned and a learner-centred approach was put at the core of ELT policy. Furthermore, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages, which places great emphasis on the role of autonomy in learning and teaching was introduced into the new English teaching

³ It was republished in 2006.

curriculum. In addition, MoNE introduced a new assessment system in conformity with the norms of the EU. The suggested means of assessment in the recent curriculum document is based on the European Language Portfolio (Kırkgöz, 2005; MoNE, 2006). Following the curriculum reform, MoNE redefined general teaching competencies. MoNE sees this as a very important step because for MoNE, teachers are responsible for the effective and efficient implementation of the new curriculum, which has been devised along constructivist lines. In the words of the erstwhile Minister of Education, Hüseyin Çelik:

Our teachers are expected to have sufficient subject-specific knowledge, to convey this knowledge to their students through a constructivist approach in line with the new programme, to have skills for collaboration with colleagues and communication with students together with administrative and organisational skills, and to efficiently exchange information with all concerned stakeholders, especially with families ... within this context, it is not possible for our teachers to fulfil their obligations without identifying professional competencies (SBEP, 2006, p. ii).

There are two sets of competencies: generic teacher competencies across disciplines and subject-area specific competencies. The generic teacher competencies developed in 2006 consist of seven main competencies: personal and professional values, professional development, knowing the student, the learning and teaching process, the monitoring and evaluation of learning and development, school-family and society relationships, and knowledge of the curriculum and content. 31 sub-competencies and 233 performance indicators are also identified. Subject specific competencies were identified and published in 2008 (MoNE, 2008). There are five core competencies developed for teachers of English at all levels.

These are: planning and organizing the process of English teaching, improving language skills, monitoring and evaluating language learning, collaborating with school, family and society, and ensuring professional development (MoNE, 2008). On the basis of these competencies, MoNE developed the School Based Professional Development Model in 2007, and piloted it in 6 provinces out of 81⁴. The piloting process was completed in 2008 and MoNE sent a notice to schools nationwide informing teachers about the competencies and professional development model in 2009 (MoNE, 2009a).

The final change that marks this period is the Teaching Career Ladder Programme (TPCLP) which was implemented by MoNE in order to increase the quality of teachers, improve subject knowledge and skills, and encourage teachers to be more productive (MoNE, 2005b). MoNE divided the career ladder into four: teacher candidate, teacher, expert teacher and lead teacher (MoNE, 2005b). The programme is designed in a way that teachers need to fulfil a number of requirements to achieve each level. These include a certain length of teaching service, attendance at in-service seminars, obtaining a postgraduate degree or passing a multiple-choice exam. The programme has caused a fierce debate in the country and the current opposition party⁵ applied to the Supreme Court for the cancellation of the programme on the grounds that it was against the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey – the principle of equal opportunity. It was explained in the case filed that MoNE determines who attends in-service seminars, it is not a decision a teacher makes and this is a source of great inequality.

⁴ Ankara, Bolu, Hatay, Kocaeli, İzmir, and Van

⁵ The Republic People's Party

2010-2014

In 2010, the government put a new project into practice: The Fatih Project. The project aimed to equip all schools with the latest information technology and transform classes into smart classes. In-service training sessions have also been organized to help teachers develop computer skills. Following this, in 2011, two more changes were introduced. The first of these was a directive named Standards for Primary Education published in the Official Bulletin numbered 2646 (MoNE, 2011a). The directive is important for several reasons. For example, it allows every school to carry out self-assessment to determine its quality status. MoNE aims to empower schools through self-assessment in accordance with its decentralisation plans. The legislation also encourages schools to make improvement plans, and to implement these. The legislation introduces school development teams into the system. These teams are composed of teachers. The second change was the Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education project funded by the Council of Europe. As part of this project, the Qualifications Framework for a Democratic School Culture was introduced and has since been piloted in schools in order to improve and enrich the culture of democracy in schools which is one of the main principles of the Turkish Education system. At the end of 2011, the Provincial National Education Directorates Commission of Programme Development which was introduced in 1995 was abolished by Chair's Approval no. 82202 along with the other 53 regulations that were no longer in use, including the one about the Curriculum Laboratory Schools. This was done as part of a project that aimed to reduce the amount of regulations relating to the education system.

2012 witnessed three significant changes. The first of these is the government's 2023 Vision Strategy, which was introduced in Chapter 1. The second change is the School Uniform Policy, which now allows students to choose what clothes they wear in school. The third change is the legislation known as the 4+4+4 law or 12-years Compulsory Education Programme, which extended the length of compulsory education from 8 to 12 years. The purpose of 4+4+4 was explained as being to improve education quality and increase upper secondary completion rates. This restructured the education system into three levels (primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education) of four years each. This transition has led to an immediate need for the redesign of the current teaching programmes (MoNE, 2013a). The new system has important implications for English language education, in particular because it mandates that English instruction is to be implemented from the 2nd grade onward, rather than the 4th grade (MoNE, 2013a); therefore, a new curriculum which accommodates the 2nd and 3rd grades has been designed. As the newly-designed 2nd and 3rd grade syllabi will be serving as the foundation for English language learning, MoNE aims to revise the syllabi for the 4th to the 8th grades in order to maintain continuity (MoNE, 2013a).

In 2013, MoNE introduced Awards for Innovation in Education, which aimed to encourage educators to contribute original and innovative ideas to the education system. At the time of writing, four ceremonies have been held and a number of projects developed by teachers, students, and other members of the public have received awards.

Moreover, although all school levels have been subject to these changes, a change introduced in 2013 brought lower-secondary schools under the spotlight. Until 2013,

students in lower secondary schools used to take a single centralised exam – *Seviye Belirleme Sınavı* (SBS) (The Level Determination Examination) – at the end of their 8th year. High performance in SBS used to open the doors of good high schools to students. SBS was abolished and a new centralised examination system, which is known as TEOG (The High School Entrance Exam) was introduced. According to the new system, each academic year students in lower secondary schools take a total of 12 centrally administered multiple-choice examinations, of which 2 test their English language proficiency.

Furthermore, in 2013, the erstwhile Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan announced a democratization package. With this package, Erdoğan lifted the restrictions on the wearing of Islamic headscarves in schools. As a result, teachers working in state schools regardless of their sex or religious beliefs took advantage of this reform and gained some freedom in choosing what to wear when working. Following this, in 2014 MoNE revised the regulations on the pre-school, primary & lower-secondary school institutions and defined many issues concerning these levels of education (MoNE, 2014b). These include admissions policy, evaluating student success, and behaviors, responsibilities of head teachers, deputy head teachers and teachers, roles of school committees, organization of classroom and corridors. Finally, in 2014 a directive named ‘The Quality Management System in Education’ (MoNE, 2014c) was issued which was organized in order to reward those schools who carried out self-assessments and showed some progress.

The most recent changes

The changes that will be reviewed in this section took place after the data analysis for this PhD study was completed. As a result of a failed coup in 15 July 2016, some critical changes have been made in the Turkish education system. The details of what happened on the night of 15th July and its consequences have been widely reported in the media and are now common knowledge. Thus they do not form a topic for this thesis. However it is important to note that allegations have been made by the government that Fethullah Gülen, who has been in conflict with the president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan since 2013, is the main person who arranged the coup.

Fethullah Gülen is a cleric in voluntary exile in US and the founder of the Gülen movement. He has had strong relationships with Turkish politicians since the 1970s and has accumulated, and wielded power since then. Gülen's community, known as 'Gülenists' in public set up several building publishing companies to produce books for the schools run by the Gülen movement, which has become widespread in recent years. Since the failed coup, approximately 21.000 teachers who had links with the Gülen movement have been dismissed. Following this, MoNE introduced the Ethics Commission for Civil Servants and decided to run training on ethics for educators (MoNE, 2016a). The regulation gives details about the roles and duties of the commission, but does not explain what is considered ethical and unethical. The consequences of the attempted coup for the Turkish education system are an evolving situation that is outside the scope of the thesis.

In addition to the ethics commission, after July 2016, MoNE reviewed its regulations for contracted teachers. Contracted teachers are assigned to a school by MoNE for

the duration of one year and discharged at the end of the year (MoNE, 2016b).

Since July 2016, 15.000 contracted teachers have been assigned to schools across Turkey (MoNE, 2016c). Finally, in the first month of 2017, İsmet Yılmaz, the current Minister of National Education announced that the curriculum programme for all school subjects had been revised and updated. Unlike curriculum revisions in the past, MoNE published all the new curriculum programmes on a website⁶ and asked the public to examine, evaluate and critique the programmes. The new curriculum programmes will be implemented in schools in September 2017 (Habertürk, 2017). In the next section, information about the teaching profession in Turkey including a brief discussion of teacher quality is provided.

2.4 The teaching profession in Turkey

The words ‘education’, ‘teaching’, and ‘teachers’ may convey different meanings in different contexts. In the Turkish context, as already observed, these words are directly associated with Atatürk. Following the introduction of the new Turkish alphabet in 1928, Atatürk was given the title of ‘*baş öğretmen*’ which means ‘head teacher’ or ‘head master’. Atatürk was the first Minister of National Education and always stressed the importance of teaching and teachers for the development of the country throughout his life. On one occasion in the İzmir Teachers’ Academy in 1925, he repeated his views about the role and importance of teachers:

⁶ <http://mufredat.meb.gov.tr/>

The only authority that saves the nations is teachers. A nation, which is deprived of teachers, educators, has not become a nation yet. It can only be called an ordinary mass. A mass needs teachers and educators in order to become a nation.

Milletleri kurtaranlar yalnız ve ancak muallimlerdir. Muallimden, mürebbiden mahrum bir millet henüz millet namını almak istidadını kesbetmemistir. Ona alelâde bir kütle denir, millet denemez. Bir kütle millet olabilmek için mutlaka mürebbilere, muallimlere muhtaçtır.

(Atatürk Research Centre, 2006)

Another incident that occurred during one of his periodical school visits is still remembered by most of the country's educators as an example of the respect he showed to teachers. In this incident, he visited a rural school. When Atatürk entered the only classroom of the school, these were his words to the young teacher who stood up and left his desk with respect:

Please don't leave your desk. Continue teaching. If it is okay with you, I would like to stay and learn from you. In a classroom, a teacher is more important than a president.

Lütfen yerinizde oturunuz ve dersinize devam ediniz. Eğer izin verirsiniz, biz de sizden faydalanmak isteriz. Sınıfa girdiği zaman cumhurbaşkanı bile öğretmenlerden sonra gelir.

(Egeli, 1959, p. 40)

In the early days of the republic, teachers had a privileged status. Karagözoğlu and Murray (1988) describe this period as a golden age for teachers financially and morally. However, according to Karagözoğlu and Murray (1988, p. 174), this has changed year by year after the death of Atatürk:

Political events between 1960 and 1980 resulted in placing quasi-limitations on educational influence in order to reduce competition in political matters. The teaching profession became a less attractive occupation among college students selecting career options. Today teachers in Turkey are facing many problems, such as low salary, low status, heavy demands made upon time, over-burdened tasking, less sophisticated physical facilities, lack of opportunities to improve professional knowledge and effective performance, and finally, lack of job security.

Some of today's scholars share similar views (e.g. İnal and Akkaymak, 2012). The statistics about teachers, however, tell a different story. First of all, Turkey is a country with a large and growing school-age population and there is great demand for an increase in the teaching workforce (World Bank, 2011). According to the Educational Statistics published in 2014/15, the total number of teachers working in schools in Turkey is 889.695. The following table shows the number of

teachers by school level⁷ (primary, lower secondary and high school), type (private and state) and gender ratio.

	Total	Female	Male
Primary education	295,252	173,078	122,174
	273,058	156,288	116,770
State	22,194	5404	16,790
Private			
Lower secondary	296,065	159,672	136,393
State	273,049	145,470	127,579
Private	23,016	14,202	8,814
High school	298,378	138,453	159,925
State	267,265	121,727	145,538
Private	31,113	14,387	16,726

Table 1 Number of teachers in Turkish lower secondary schools

When compared to previous years, a steady growth in the number of teachers can be easily observed. For example, in 2012/13 the total number of teachers working at lower secondary schools was 269,759 and in 2013/14, this number was 280,804. In addition to this, when we look at the relevant statistics, a noticeable increase can be seen in teachers' salaries, too. For instance, from 2000 to 2010, teachers' salaries in

⁷ Unfortunately, the statistics do not provide any information about the number of teachers by subject. Hence, I did not have the information about the number of English teachers working in state lower secondary schools. However, I later used my right to information and applied to the Ministry of National Education in order to access to this information (Turkish Law on the Right to Information). MoNE responded on 27 May 2015. According to this, the number of Turkish teachers of English is 63.619. Of these, 16.448 are males and 47.171 are females.

primary and upper secondary education more than doubled. This continued in the following years. Starting from January 2016, the highest salary a teacher receives is 3,315 Turkish Lira and the lowest salary is 2,764. Nabi Avcı, the Minister of Education at the time of writing⁸, made the following comment about the increase in teachers' salaries:

In 2002, teachers' salaries was 470 Lira (...) in 2016, teachers are earning over 3,173 including the fees for the additional lessons they give. When we look at the report published by OECD, Turkey has made the most progress in improving teachers' salaries within the last 5 years (Sabah, 2014).

In addition to teacher salaries, it is also important to mention that all educational staff working in public schools in Turkey are employed as civil servants. This means that they have a fairly secure position. However, three different types of teachers exist in the Turkish education system. These are regular teachers who have secure positions, contracted teachers who are assigned for one year to any school in their preferred location and temporary teachers with no fixed wage, but who are paid according to the number of hours they work (Ertürk, 2012).

Moreover, in Turkey, teacher candidates pass through many stages to become civil servants and gain job security. First, the National Basic Education Law requires all teacher candidates to earn higher education degrees in order to become teachers. English language teachers, for example, acquire their degrees from the English Language Teaching departments of the Education Faculties. Those students who have studied in particular departments of Faculties of Arts

⁸ The current Minister of National Education is İsmet Yılmaz since 24.05.2016.

and Sciences⁹ can also become English teachers on the condition that they hold a pedagogic formation certificate (a teacher training certificate). These departments are: English Language and Literature, American Culture and Literature, English Translation and Interpretation, English Linguistics, Translation Studies, English Culture and Literature. Universities through the Higher Education Council are responsible for the education of teachers. The training covers general knowledge, subject knowledge and teacher training.

Regardless of levels or subjects taught, the candidates complete four years of undergraduate education. Graduation from one of the teacher education programme does not result directly in employment. Candidates who want to work in state schools are required to take the State Personnel Examination, which is known as KPSS – a centralised exam for employment in the civil service. This exam is staged only once a year and tests teachers' knowledge of educational sciences, general culture and general ability. Since 2013, it also tests subject knowledge. KPSS is a norm-referenced test. The minimum score (out of 100) a candidate needs to achieve in order to become a civil servant depends on the recruitment needs of MoNE. To illustrate, English teacher candidates scoring 67.7 or above in 2015 were employed by MoNE, while the others who did not meet this grade had to wait a year in order to take the exam again. In 2014, the minimum score required was 70.3; in 2012 this was 76.2. Successful candidates are employed as probationary teachers by MoNE.

Probationary teachers are required to work for at least one year. A recent

⁹ Commonly known as Faculty of Science and Letters in Turkey, which gives education in basic and applied sciences.

change, introduced in 2014, requires teachers to take another written or oral examination in order to become permanent teachers at the end of their first year. Those who pass the exam successfully are assigned as permanent teachers. Those, who have not passed, are employed in a different school for a further year, before taking the exam again in the coming year. Probationary teachers who have failed the exam twice lose their probationary status and are dismissed from the civil service. The National Basic Education Law defines all procedures in detail.

Teacher quality in Turkey: a brief discussion

In Turkey, there are some concerns about the quality of teachers. The World Bank (2011) sees two main reasons for this: poor pre-service training and insufficient in-service teacher training. I will discuss the poor pre-service training first. Referring to the OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey undertaken in 2009, the World Bank (2011, p.19) reports that when compared to other OECD countries, Turkish teachers suffer from a lack of pedagogical preparation:

Very few university education faculties offer active programs designed to develop the kind of skills that teachers need to work with students in an engaging, transformative fashion. In some instances, the pre-service curriculum is known to focus too much on test preparation for the teacher civil service examination, the next step in the ladder to becoming a teacher.

MoNE was responsible for all higher education institutions until 1981 in Turkey. However, with the implementation of the Higher Education Law, higher education was restructured and the responsibility for teacher education was

transferred to universities (Akdemir, 2013). Deniz and Şahin (2006, p.22) explain that this change in Turkish higher education institutions had positive consequences:

They [the universities] gained an autonomous status, functional structure and common standards, and most important of all, they acquired a legal base. As a result, duration and levels of teacher education increased, the quality of staff was brought up to the accepted standards.

However, in the 1990s many concerns about teacher training programmes emerged. Some of these were:

- ✚ Education faculties were not able to train a high quality teaching force;
- ✚ The curricula used in these faculties were not adequate for preparing students for the teaching profession;
- ✚ The connection between the universities, which train teachers and MoNE, which employs these teachers, was too weak and a lack of cooperation between them was apparent (Akdemir, 2013).

Deniz and Şahin (2006) report that in order to reduce the flaws in their programmes, it became the universities' highest priority to make changes in their undergraduate and graduate courses. For that reason, academics and educators were sent to the United States and United Kingdom to observe these nations' education systems. In addition to these efforts, in order to improve teacher-training programmes by restructuring them, in co-operation with the Council of Higher Education and the World Bank, the Project on Pre-Service Teacher Training was developed in

1998/1999 (MoNE, 2005a). As a result, a series of teaching materials and books were designed; the Faculties of Education and schools signed a protocol to increase cooperation; teacher training programmes were modified in a way that offered more practice-based learning. Despite these efforts, Akdemir (2013)¹⁰ argues that the project remained far from bringing permanent solutions to the problems that exist in teacher training programmes.

Additionally, insufficient in-service teacher training is seen as another factor, leading to a low quality teacher work force in Turkey:

Every year, about 20,000 teachers get trained out of a total pool of about 600,000. This means that the average Turkish teacher gets in-service training only once in his/her lifetime as a teacher. As a result of all these factors, Turkish teachers are not equipped enough to engage students' interest and enthusiasm, teach interactively, or offer stimulating learning experiences that help students construct their own knowledge and skills (World Bank, 2011, p.19).

In Turkey, MoNE provides training for teachers. However, all of the in-service training activities were centrally planned and conducted until 1993. Now, provincial and district directorates are also authorized to plan, programme and conduct in-

¹⁰ Akdemir also criticises the governments motto of 'a university for every province' says that today in Turkey there is at least one state-run university and more than one private or charity-run universities in every province. The emphasis on quantity over quality is detrimental to the universities, Akdemir claims. The concerns about and plans for improvement of teacher training programmes are exceedingly large and it is not possible to discuss them all here.

service training activities locally (MoNE 2005a). MoNE published a detailed report about the 2013 in-service training activities in 2014. This is the most recent document that is available. The following table shows in-service training statistics between 2004 and 2013 as published by MoNE (2014e):

Year	Central in-service training		Local in-service training	
	The number of activities	The number of attendees	The number of activities	The number of attendees
2004	526	34,154	11,422	587,402
2005	543	33,156	9050	478,168
2006	634	44,006	13,460	472,533
2007	614	44,808	18,725	415,682
2008	751	41,783	24,416	481,412
2009	930	45,102	18,987	373,365
2010	957	48,629	18,554	396,063
2011	1156	51,557	19,972	427,879
2012	286	13,071	13,577	369,046
2013	290	13,634	19,032	346,317

Table 2 In-service training statistics between 2004 and 2013

For instance, as can be seen in the table, 290 different training activities were conducted centrally in 2013 and the number of teachers attending these activities was 13,634. The number of locally planned training activities in the same year was 19,032 and the number of attendees was 346,317. This shows that the comments put forward in the World Bank's document seems to be about centralised in-service training, and does not involve the locally organized training activities.

2.5 Chapter conclusion

This chapter provided some contextual information about the Turkish education system within which this PhD study was undertaken. The Turkish education system, as presented in the chapter, is highly centralised and under the supervision and control of the government. A number of changes have been introduced to the education system in recent years, as has been presented above. At the time of writing this thesis, further changes have been implemented and these are also incorporated in the chapter. Overall, the Turkish education system is evolving year by year in many different ways but still maintaining its centralised hierarchical structure. The chapter also looked at English language teaching in the country, which is the focus of this study. Some of the recent changes undertaken in the country were for the purposes of improving English language teaching and these were discussed in Section 2.3.

The focus of this PhD study is on Turkish teachers of English. The training or appointment of English teachers is not different from those of any other subject teachers. Hence, the chapter has also provided information about the teaching profession in Turkey including a brief discussion of teacher quality. Overall, the teaching profession in Turkey offers job security, but there are some concerns over the quality of teachers in the country mainly due to poor pre-service and in-service training. Most of the changes within the education system discussed so far are significant in relation to the discussion of the concept of teacher autonomy and I will refer to them later when reporting and interpreting my findings. I will now begin reviewing the literature on the concept of teacher autonomy.

3 Literature review

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to synthesise theoretical and empirical literature on teacher autonomy and to justify how this research study addresses specific gaps and inconsistencies in the literature. It is important to have a developed understanding of the idea of autonomy when examining this notion in relation to teachers. The chapter begins with an overview of the meaning of autonomy (Section 3.2) where the philosophical, psychological and sociological conceptualisations of autonomy are considered. In Sections 3.3 and 3.4, the working contexts of teachers and the nature of teaching are described in order to understand and identify teachers' professional roles and the kind of tasks they fulfil in their working contexts. The aim is to determine the key areas in which teachers can exercise autonomy. In Section 3.5, the definitions of teacher autonomy in and outside the field of ELT are evaluated and the impact of teacher autonomy is discussed. Section 3.6 reviews the studies undertaken in international and Turkish contexts in chronological order. Incorporating ideas derived from previous discussions in the chapter, a critical realist model to teacher autonomy this study adopts is introduced in section 3.7. Finally, Section 3.8 concludes the chapter.

3.2 Defining autonomy: An overview

The origin of the term 'autonomy' is derived from the Greek stems: *autos* 'self' and *nomon* 'rule'. However, there is no single meaning one can offer as a definition of autonomy. A wide variety of definitions of the concept of autonomy is evident in the literature. The definitions stem from diverse perspectives, and varied practical interests in the notion of autonomy and can be located in a broad range of traditions, such as philosophy, feminism, psychology, sociology, and education. The concept of autonomy has a long history in the discipline of philosophy. It, for instance, is the centrepiece of Immanuel Kant's ethics developed in the eighteenth century. Autonomy also constitutes a significant part of social theory developed by Cornelius Castoriadis, a more contemporary philosopher, who sees social autonomy as a prerequisite for individual autonomy. Within the philosophical discourses on autonomy, this part of the literature review traces two recent theoretical dividing lines: individual and relational accounts.

The individual approach to autonomy sees autonomy as resting completely within the individual and is followed mostly by liberal philosophers such as Gerald Dworkin (1976), Joel Feinberg (1989) and John Christman (1989, 2004). A more relational account of autonomy is brought into the field by feminist philosophers such as Diana Tietjen-Meyers (1987), Marilyn Friedman (1997) and Catriona Mackenzie (2014) who conceive autonomy in a more social way. The concept of autonomy has also occupied psychological theorists. Self-determination theory (SDT), a very well-known and accepted empirical approach to motivation, sees autonomy as a key to understanding effective behavioural self-regulation (Ryan and Deci, 2006). Similarly, sociological studies see autonomy as an important characteristic of professionalism

(e.g. Davis, 1996, Sekhar, 2011). The discussion of these philosophical, psychological and sociological accounts of autonomy is important because clarifying these theoretical boundaries can open up possibilities for furthering our understanding of the nature and consequences of autonomy, how it develops, and how it can be diminished or maximized by specific conditions (Ryan and Deci, 2006). Equally and importantly, these accounts of autonomy can help us gain insights into how autonomy should be understood in relation to English teachers' professional lives.

3.2.1 Individual account of autonomy

The definitions of autonomy in philosophy vary mostly depending on whether autonomy is considered as an individual or a relational concept. Through an individualistic lens for example, Dworkin (1976) argues that an autonomous person is 'one who does his own thing' (p. 24). Dworkin theorised autonomy by this formula: 'Autonomy= Authenticity + Independence' (p.24). According to this formula, authenticity is the first element of autonomy. For Dworkin, authenticity is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of autonomy because a person must also be independent from others:

A person's motivational structure may be his, without being his own. This may occur in either of two ways. First, the identification with his motivations, or the choice of the type of person he wants to be, may have been produced by manipulation, deception, the withholding of relevant information, and so on. It may have been influenced in decisive ways by others in such a fashion

that we are not prepared to think of it as his own choice (Dworkin, 1976, p.25).

Dworkin here pays attention to the issues of manipulation, deception and influences of others in one's decision-making processes.

Another individualist, Joel Feinberg (1989) lists four closely related meanings of autonomy. The first refers to the capacity to govern yourself, which represents the ability to act rationally or 'the ability to make rational choices' (1989, p. 28). When understood as a capacity to govern yourself, autonomy can be interpreted as a capacity which is not innate, but which develops over time. Autonomy is understood to differ in degree: 'Some people are "more in control of themselves" [original emphasis] than others, have more prudence, sagacity, self-reliance, control of themselves than others,' which may be caused by dispositions of character, feeling, or sensibility, and differences in life circumstances (Feinberg, 1989, p.30). The second meaning Feinberg suggests refers to 'the actual condition of self-government' (p. 28). A person may have both the capacity for, and right to, self-government but unless this person has an opportunity to exercise these rights and capacities, s/he will not be able to escape from being an unwilling slave to another (Feinberg, 1989). This point is important and relevant here, as one not only needs the competence but also the opportunity to exercise autonomy, and opportunity is more or less available for most people (Feinberg, 1989).

When defining autonomy as a condition, Feinberg refers to a number of virtues, which are causally and conceptually interconnected. These virtues represent characteristics of an autonomous person, as proposed by Feinberg (1989). These are;

- ✚ *Self-possession*: The autonomous person is not possessed by anyone. He is “his own man” or she is “her own woman” (p.31);
- ✚ *Distinct self-identity*: The autonomous person possesses his/her own individuality and cannot be defined by his or her relations with others;
- ✚ *Authenticity; Self-selection*: A person is autonomous to an extent to which his or her tastes opinions, ideals, goals values, and preferences are authentically his;
- ✚ *Self-creation*: The autonomous person is not a self-made one. His/her character, for example, cannot be entirely his/her own. Self-creation needs to be understood as a process of self-re-creation by means of reflection on new and old experiences;
- ✚ *Self-legislation*: In Kantian manner, self-legislation is making one’s own laws, laying down one’s own rules;
- ✚ *Moral authenticity*: The autonomous person is not only s/he whose tastes and opinions are authentically his/her own; s/he is also one whose moral convictions and principles are genuinely his/her own, rooted in his/her own character, and not merely inherited.

Feinberg’s strong emphasis on the individual is very apparent in his first six principles of an autonomous person. The author continues representing the characteristics of an autonomous person with the same focus (pp. 31-42):

- ✚ *Self-fidelity*: The autonomous person firmly sticks to his/her own principles;
- ✚ *Self-control*: ‘A person governs himself when s/he is not governed from the outside by someone else, and when s/he does govern from the inside

–when s/he is in control of himself’ (p.39). This implies that self-governance is not possible if one lacks self-control;

- ✚ *Self-reliance*: An autonomous person is capable of surviving without the help of others;

- ✚ *Self-generation*: One’s tastes, principles, goals, opinions must be authentically his or her own. This makes the person autonomous.

However, this is not enough. The person must authentically own his/her projects, designs and strategies. If a person does not take initiatives on his or her own, this means his or her activities are determined by others.

This makes the person deficient and more dependent on others;

- ✚ *Responsibility for self*: The autonomous person takes responsibility for his/her own actions and their consequences.

The third of Feinberg’s (1989) meanings refers to an ideal of character derived from the actual condition of self-government. The fourth meaning, in the words of Feinberg (1989, p.28), is ‘the sovereign authority to govern oneself.’ That is, autonomy can be understood as a set of rights: having the right to govern oneself.

Self-governance emerges as the core of individualistic accounts of autonomy. For example, Feinberg’s four meanings centre on autonomy as an actual psychological condition that amounts to the quality of self-government (Christman, 1989). In more recent work, Christman (2009) elaborates on the concept of self-government and states that it is ‘the ability of the person to guide her life from her own perspective rather than be manipulated by others or be forced into a particular path by surreptitious or irresistible choices’ (p. 134). What is meant by ‘her own perspective’ here is acting on the basis of motives, values or reasons that are one’s own. These all imply that one needs to act, reflect and choose independently to be able to be an

autonomous agent. To summarize, the individualistic account of autonomy is concerned with or understood as an agent's capacity to make judgments independently in isolation from others (Ashley, 2012).

3.2.2 Relational accounts of autonomy

Individual accounts of autonomy are not without critique. In her seminal article entitled 'Personal Autonomy and the Paradox of Feminine Socialization', Diana Tietjens-Meyers (1987) makes two important points: first that 'it is possible for people to act autonomously without having control over the basic direction of their lives' (p. 624). Second, Tietjen-Meyers defines autonomy as competency, which involves skills of self-discovery, self-direction, and self-definition and concludes that without social relationships, it is not possible to develop autonomy competency. Tietjen-Meyers's ideas have been built on recently by a number of feminist authors. In recent years, individualists have been criticised even more in particular for seeing autonomy in a way that resides in an impenetrable inner citadel, a place immune from external influences or alien causes (e.g. Crittenden, 1993; Donchin, 1995; Mackenzie and Stoljar 2000; Friedman, 2003; Nelsen 2010). These writers vigorously challenge the individualist account of autonomy for its characterization of the autonomous individual and its lack of understanding of relationships between individuals and their social contexts. Crittenden (1993, p.35) gives this clear message to the liberal theorists:

Liberal theorists who champion autonomy should ... abandon any notion of selves as social atoms or isolates and build liberalism on the implications of autonomy's social nature. Part of those implications is that social institutions

that foster and exercise autonomy must involve dialogue or communicative exchange.

‘Autonomy has a social nature’ (p.35), Crittenden (1993, pp. 37-38) continues:

Because persons are not born with autonomy; it requires psychosocial development. The claim, so obvious, is worth making because some think that autonomy is part or parcel of liberal individualism and that liberal individuals spring up full-blown like mushrooms ... Autonomy has a social nature because persons need a social context to scrutinize it, one must use a language, which is a social product.(...) [and] autonomy requires social interaction, some form of dialogue.

Relational autonomy does not refer to a single unified conception of autonomy and has been referred to as an umbrella term (Mackenzie and Stoljar, 2000). For instance, it embraces all views of autonomy, which are based on the conviction that ‘persons are socially embedded and identities are formed within the context of relationships’ (Mackenzie and Stoljar, 2000, p. 4). Proponents of the relational view of autonomy question the assumption that selves are social atoms and emphasize instead the significance of social relationships (Friedman, 1997). As MacDonald (2002) proposes, the relational understanding of autonomy is capable of application to a wide range of contexts, fields, or actors. It offers an alternative way of looking at autonomy, which involves the consideration of one’s social context and relationships and the importance to this PhD study is that it helps enhance our understanding of teacher autonomy.

Drawing on earlier feminist critiques in their chapter, Mackenzie and Stoljar (2000, p.21) emphasise the need for a more detailed and richer account of the autonomous agent and continue:

An analysis of the characteristics and capacities of the self cannot be adequately undertaken without attention to the rich and complex social and historical contexts in which agents are embedded; they point to the need to think of autonomy as a characteristic of agents who are emotional, embodied, desiring, creative, and feeling as well as rational creatures; and they highlight the ways in which agents are both psychically internally differentiated and socially differentiated from others.

The accounts of both individual and relational theorists are important in bringing greater sophistication to our understanding of the nature of autonomy. They have enormously contributed to my own understanding of autonomy in relation to teachers. However, if we are to understand the nature and value of autonomy in detail, how it develops and how it can be diminished or facilitated, it is equally important to explore autonomy from the point of Self Determination Theory, a widely accepted psychological theory of motivation of which the core is human autonomy.

3.2.3 Self-Determination view of autonomy

Self-determination theory (SDT) is a theory of human motivation developed by the psychologists Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan. According to SDT, all human beings have three fundamental psychological needs. These are competence, relatedness and autonomy. SDT argues that satisfaction of these basic needs promotes persons' autonomous motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2006; Deci and Ryan,

2012; 2014). While on the one hand within the field of psychology, the ideas of competence and relatedness as universal psychological needs are accepted, autonomy as a basic human need, its meaning (Deci and Ryan, 2014) and its feasibility in non-Western cultures are widely debated (Guiffreda, 2006; Deci and Ryan, 2014). In this section, I will review and critique these arguments.

Deci and Ryan (2014) explain that the idea of autonomy as a fundamental psychological need emerged from empirical research, which examined the effects of external influences on intrinsic motivation, defined as engaging in a behaviour because it is interesting and enjoyable:

The research showed that tangible rewards, evaluations, threats of punishment, and deadlines tended to undermine intrinsic motivation, whereas choice and having one's perspectives and feelings acknowledged tended to enhance intrinsic motivation (p.19).

SDT demonstrates that autonomy is important for several reasons. Ryan and Deci (2006) highlight three of these. The first is performance and creativity. When autonomous motivation is undermined, there will be a decline in performance, which requires 'flexible, heuristic, creative, or complex capacities' (Ryan and Deci, 2006, p.1564). The second is the quality of relationships. When people are supported for autonomy, this will facilitate their attachment to their work. The third is well-being and psychopathology. Controlling contexts have negative effects on wellness and autonomy; supportive contexts maximize wellness. The support for autonomy and its intrinsic values, indicated above, are also important in the workplace. This is necessary for promoting better work performance and better adjustment (Deci and Ryan, 2014). Deci and Ryan (2012) define autonomy-supportive environments as

the ones in which individuals' perspectives are acknowledged and they are encouraged to try out new things, and are given some choice. In autonomy-supportive environments, it is also important that the use of controlling language and contingencies is reduced (Deci and Ryan, 2012).

Autonomy, within SDT, is defined as self-governance, or rule by the self but Ryan and Deci insist that autonomy is not equivalent to independence, separateness or individualism (Ryan and Deci, 2006). It requires the individual to behave with a sense of volition, willingness, and concurrence and entails internalizing and integrating external influences over their behaviours and also learning to deal effectively with drives and emotions (Deci and Ryan, 2012). From a SDT perspective, individuals are presumed to be inherently active and to 'proactively initiate engagement with their environments' (Deci and Ryan, 2012, p.88). They achieve this through intrinsic motivation (as defined above) and through the process of internalized extrinsic motivation, which includes 'internalizing various types of information from the external world (e.g., values, attitudes, contingencies, and knowledge), as well as integrating the regulation of internal forces (e.g., drives and emotions)' (Deci and Ryan, 2014, p. 16).

Together with an individual's motivational states, dispositions, experiences and orientations, SDT recognises the importance of social contexts. It draws attention to the impact of social context to facilitate or impair an individual's ability to satisfy basic psychological needs. According to SDT, awareness about what is happening within and around oneself facilitates autonomy. Awareness includes understanding of how social environments affect individuals in order to be able to avoid or resist the potential negative effects of these (Deci and Ryan, 2012). Lastly, in SDT,

autonomy is seen as a construct that is not bound by culture. Deci and Ryan (2012; 2014), for instance, argue that autonomy is important for individuals and their well-being in all cultures, regardless of their orientations towards collectivism or individualism. This means that whatever values an individual's culture endorses, when their autonomy, competence and relatedness needs are satisfied, they show greater engagement and wellness (Deci and Ryan, 2012; 2014).

SDT is not without its critics. In particular, the assertion that the need for autonomy is a cultural universal has been challenged, Oishi and Diener (2001), for example, examined the role of independent and interdependent goal attainment and motivation in temporal changes in the well-being of Asians and European American college students. The researchers found that Asian and European Americans go through different processes to attain their well-being:

European Americans appear to gain and maintain their well-being by achieving goals that they pursue for their own enjoyment and fun. On the other hand, Asian Americans seem to attain and maintain their well-being by achieving goals that they pursue to make important others happy and meet the expectations of others (Oishi and Diener, 2001, p. 1680).

However, Chirkov *et al.* (2003), in their widely cited study, respond to the suggestion that autonomy is not a universal need and argue that one of the main problems with those arguments is related to their understanding of autonomy as independence and individualism. Autonomy must be defined in an exact way, which is 'behaving with a sense of volition, endorsement, willingness, and choice' (Deci and Ryan, 2014, p. 18). According to Chirkov *et al.* (2003), autonomy is a human need for all

cultures. The authors provide evidence for this from their study undertaken with five hundred and fifty-nine people from four different cultures: Russia, South Korea, Turkey and the United States. They conclude that regardless of one's culture, more autonomous action is associated with greater well-being.

3.2.4 Professional autonomy: a sociological perspective

The concept of autonomy has received great attention from the field of philosophy and psychology, as discussed above. It has also long occupied the sociological literature in relation to the autonomy of professionals. Before focusing on professional autonomy, however, it is necessary to briefly state that the concept of profession including its definitions is highly contested. This thesis adopts Evett's (2003) approach to professions. Evett (2003) defines professions as 'generic groups of occupations based on knowledge both technical and tacit.' In doing so, Evett stress her attempt to avoid drawing 'a hard and fast line between professions and other occupational groups' and her preference instead 'to emphasize the shared characteristics and common processes' (p. 397).

Autonomy in the work place, in other words, professional autonomy has been a hot topic in various disciplines such as economics, business, law, health, and education (e.g. Spiegel, 1987; Apker *et al.*, 2003; Hoecht, 2006; Petersen and Way, 2017).

Professional autonomy is defined and conceptualized differently by different authors. Engel (1970), for example, sees professional autonomy as existing on two separate levels: in relation to the occupational group or profession and in relation to the individual professional. Engel sees these levels as independent from each other, but still related. Davis (1996) refers to Engel's first level of autonomy using the term

‘organizational autonomy’, which he sees as a primary property of the profession as a whole:

A profession is autonomous insofar as it has control over its own code of ethics, standards for admission to the profession (including licensure or certification), and disciplinary procedures ...Organizational autonomy is a close relative of political autonomy. In the United States, no profession is fully autonomous in this sense. Lawyers, for example, are licensed by a state agency (usually, the state supreme court) and (at least) the final stages of discipline are in that agency's hands. While the American Bar Association does prepare a "model" code of ethics, the states do not have to adopt it (and those that do adopt it are free to make changes—and sometimes do). Lawyers are, of course, much involved in the state's regulation of lawyers, but their involvement is at the state's pleasure, not the profession's (Davis, 1996, p.445).

Each profession has its own standards and these are ‘designed to serve the moral ideal to which the profession is committed’ (Davis, 1996, p.453). One may choose that profession because s/he chooses to serve the ideal in question or just to earn a living. By making his/her choice, this implies, the individual is bound to act according to the standards of his/her profession. However, a member of a profession can still act autonomously and obeying orders does not mean that the person is not acting autonomously (Davis, 1996). The relational autonomy theorists and SDT researchers also share this view, which was discussed previously in this chapter. Furthermore, Davis comments that employment and professional autonomy are not inconsistent; and individuals can exercise autonomy in their workplaces through

self-reflection and judgment. Here, Davis draws attention to the second level of professional autonomy, which is individual professional autonomy. Individual professional autonomy, which is sometimes referred as work autonomy, is defined in many ways. Some of these are:

- ✚ The freedom to conduct tangential work activities in a normative manner in accordance with one's own discretion (Engel, 1970, p.12);
- ✚ The degree to which workers feel personal responsibility for their work and the extent to which employees have a major say in scheduling their work, selecting the equipment they like and deciding on the procedure to be followed (Sekhar, 2011, pp. 26-27);
- ✚ The degree of control and discretion that employees have over their work (Lopes *et al.*, 2014, p.342);
- ✚ Participation in decision-making, encouraging self-initiation, providing meaningful rationales and feedback and using a style of communication that is encouraging (...) extending the control that workers have over the workplace rather than having their activities tightly determined by external forces (Lopes, *et al.*, 2014, p. 358).

Despite the proliferation of definitions, within this literature, autonomy is seen as an important characteristic of professionalism and the necessary condition for self-esteem, motivation, performance, and participation, quality of work life, productivity and satisfaction (Breugh, 1985; Sekhar, 2011).

In addition, it is argued that autonomy at work has benefits for society as a whole. Lopes *et al.* (2014), for example, undertook an empirical study drawing on the 1995, 2000, 2005 and 2010 iterations of the European Working Conditions Survey. This is

the longest running survey, which enables monitoring of long-term trends in working conditions in Europe (Eurofound, 2015). Lopes *et al.*'s (2014) research found evidence that work autonomy enhanced civic behaviour, and that participation in decision-making at work helped develop more participatory behaviour. Lopes *et al.* also found that work autonomy depended on appropriate institutional and cultural contextual factors such as levels of interpersonal trust. Trust is understood as 'the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party' (Lopes *et al.*, 2014, p. 359). High levels of trust in an organization were generally associated with low levels of monitoring (Lopes *et al.*, 2014). For instance, in countries such as Finland, Sweden, the Netherlands and Denmark, which are characterised by interpersonal trust levels above the European average, people generally trust each other and comply with commitments (Lopes *et al.* 2014). According to Lopes *et al.* (2014), work environments were more supportive of autonomy in these countries and this helped reinforce equality in work. Additionally, Lopes and her colleagues provided evidence that over the last two decades, autonomy declined considerably for all skill levels in Europe, except highly skilled workers such as legislators, senior officials and managers (Lopes, *et al.*, 2014).

Culture of trust was a critical point discussed in an earlier study undertaken by Sahlberg (2007) with reference to the Finnish education system. Sahlberg explains that the culture of trust means that 'education authorities and political leaders believe that teachers, together with principals, parents and their communities, know how to provide the best possible education for their children and youth' (p.157) and this is the approach the Finnish education system has embarked on since the 1980s. Sahlberg (2007) highlights that the Finnish teachers see that they are trusted and welcome the responsibility of making decisions pertaining to the curriculum and

overall school arrangements. Similarly, schools in Finland very quickly embraced their new roles and were willing to lead change (Sahlberg, 2007). According to Sahlberg (2007), this is a natural consequence of a well-functioning civil society and high social capital. Finland or the countries mentioned in Lopes et al.'s (2014) study are not my focus in this study, but the points highlighted in the discussion of professional autonomy in Europe offer insights into the exercise of teacher autonomy in the Turkish context, which was taken into account when analysing my study data and discussing the findings. I should also note that it is outside the scope of my study to go into any discussion about nation/state culture and national culture. However, I acknowledge that this is a contested area with different and sometimes contradictory views and definitions.

So far, I have indicated that professional autonomy can be understood as operating on two separate levels (organizational autonomy and individual professional autonomy) and highlighted different definitions of individual professional autonomy that exist in the professional autonomy literature, which is of interest to my research. I have also introduced the potential benefits of autonomy in the work place. In line with the recent debate on autonomy in relation to professionals and their work environment, a considerable literature has emerged in the field of education and teachers working life studies. In the next sections, teachers' working contexts will be examined, where schools will be considered as large social organisations. I will focus on how and whether the individualistic and relational dimensions of autonomy are germane to the teachers and their work lives; how much individuality the teaching profession allows and how much influence teachers' social relationships have on their work if a teacher is to exercise autonomy. This will follow with a discussion on the nature of teaching. This will aim to identify teachers' professional

roles and the kinds of tasks they fulfil in their working contexts referring to the literature on teachers' roles.

3.3 The working context of teachers

Since the outset, this thesis has argued that the exercise of autonomy by language teachers should not be limited to the classroom because their work is not limited to the classrooms and they are part of schools as active participants. Schools can be described as large social organisations as they offer study and networking areas for students and workplaces for teachers and other staff. The term 'organisation' is commonly used in the field of business. Schools are different from business organisations, though. Ball (1987) explains this from a micropolitical point of view, 'schools contain within them diverse and contradictory strategies of control' (p. 8). Collins (1975) identifies three types of organisation. These are: hierarchical organisations, membership-controlled organisations (e.g. political parties, trades union) and professional communities. According to Ball (1987), schools contain characteristics of all three of Collins's types of organisation:

In this respect they contain confusing messages both for the analyst and for their members (pupils and teachers and other school workers). At different times, in different sectors or in relation to different activities schools may be considered as hierarchic or membership-controlled or professional organizations. An analysis which relies on one of these typifications to the exclusion of the other risks distortion. In particular, schools occupy an uneasy middle ground between hierarchical work-organizations and member-controlled organizations (with individual schools differing from one

another according to emphasis) and for that matter between product producing systems and public service institutions. The ordinary member (teacher) retains at least some control over the organization and the conduct of their work (Ball, 1987, pp. 8-9).

This micropolitical perspective highlights another relevant aspect of the nature of schools, which is that educational organisations may also be understood as political systems. Hargreaves (1995, p. vii) suggests the real world of schools is also:

a political world, a world of power and influence, bargaining and negotiation, assertion and protection in which one's own needs must be pursued in tune with the needs and wishes of others and sometimes despite them.

A teacher whose mind is creative, generative, proactive and reflective shares this political world with students, parents, school heads, colleagues and other stakeholders. Lindblad (1997, p. 305) explains this as follows:

[Teachers are] actors involved in students' school careers and life trajectories. However, they are not part of this drama so much as individuals but rather as participants in a specific social institution, the school, with its norms, rules and frameworks. Thus, they are actors in a specific concept that to a large extent regulates their work.

Teachers' relationships with others are an important dynamic of school settings and interactions are an important part of school life (Ball, 1987; Blasé and Anderson, 1995). This, however, does not mean that teachers and what they do in schools can be understood only through their relationships with others. The professional self is another dimension that must be taken into account when examining teachers.

Kelchtermans (1993), for instance, emphasises the significance of the professional self and divides it into five interrelated parts. These are: (a) self-image (how teachers can describe themselves), (b) self-esteem (how the self evolves as a teacher), (c) job motivation (what makes teachers choose, maintain their commitment or drop out), (d) task perception (how teachers define their job), and finally (e) future perspectives (what teachers' expectations are for the future development of their job) (pp. 148-150).

From a communities of practice perspective, Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2003) claim that we must examine both the individual and the social dimensions of teachers' professional lives in order to better understand them and their actions (what they do and why). The alternative the authors offer is seeing the individual as separate from the social, but interacting with it. That is, the mind of the individual and the social world are separate, but interrelated. Biddle *et al.* (1997), two decades ago, expressed similar views and suggested that teachers were influenced not only by the rights and responsibilities imposed on them because they were employed in school, but also by the expectations that they and important others had for teachers and teaching. As well as rules and expectations, according to Biddle *et al.* (1997), the principal of the school [referred to as the 'head teacher' in the current study], curriculum specialists, parents, school board members and teachers' own opinions influenced what teachers did in school. The following example given by Lindblad (1997, p. 397) helps reinforce this point:

When we want to understand why teachers give students homework, we might refer to the fact that they are teachers who are expected to do so as that kind of actor in our schools. It is part of school as an institution governed by norms and rules to do so to act according to such common institutional

determinants connected to mutually recognized roles. However, teachers' practical reasons are not only determined by the fact that they participate in the practices of schools based on institutional determinants. If we have a closer look at teachers' practical reasoning and external determinants at work, in particular, we will find professional as well as personal determinants.

What we can understand from this is that teachers are actors with private wants and beliefs that influence their intentions and epistemic attitudes, but as well as personal determinants instructional norms, rules, acting in conformity with others can be considered to be of vital importance in the teaching profession.

Classrooms are the settings where freedom and constraints are likely to coexist for teachers and teachers use their individual interpretation of the context to exercise discretion, make decisions, and take action in their classrooms (Eggleston, 1979). Decisions can be about lesson content, teaching style, the motivation of the class, the resources to use or about the moments to change the course or pace or the incentives and disincentives being applied. These are part of the inescapable daily routine of the classroom (Eggleston, 1979). Classrooms are dynamic and complex settings with high rates of interaction and frequent changes in activities (Blase and Anderson, 1995) and teachers are in continuous dialogue with their students.

3.4 The nature of teaching

As defining the working context of teachers is complex, so too is defining the nature of teaching. For the purposes of this project, the nature of teaching can be best described by referring to research on the roles played by teachers as professionals

or the kinds of tasks teachers fulfil or are assigned in their working environments.

The term 'role' will be used throughout this thesis to refer to sets of activities expected of those in social and organisational positions (Valli and Buese, 2007).

When referring to these sets of activities in relation to teachers, I will argue that the teacher's role is not restricted to the classroom.

Kelchtermas (2013), for example, describes how teachers' and teacher educators' professional ideas, reflections, beliefs, concerns, commitments, dispositions generally revolve around the classroom while broader school issues including power issues and conflict do not really matter much for them. However, a growing body of research recognises the fact that teachers take on a number of roles outside the classroom and fulfil a variety of tasks as professionals within their working contexts. Role expansion was stressed over four decades ago in Hoyle's (1969) book entitled 'The Role of the Teacher.' Hoyle undertook a systematic analysis of the role of the teacher and portrayed teachers in the context of an industrial society, the school, and the classroom. He identified 'instruction', 'socialization', and 'evaluation', as the major social functions and corresponding roles of the teacher in an industrial society:

- ✚ *Instruction:* 'The teacher transmits a body of knowledge and skills appropriate to the abilities and needs of the children. He performs this function through direct teaching and by organizing learning situations of a less formal kind. The appropriate role is that of teacher-as-instructor which is the most obvious and public of the teachers' roles' (p. 14);
- ✚ *Socialization:* 'The teacher prepares the child for participation in the way of life of his society. [This involves teaching the values and norms of

society] (...) Success in encouraging children to internalize a particular set of values depends to a great extent upon the teachers' own embodiment of these values. The appropriate role is thus teacher-as-model' (p. 14-15);

🌈 *Evaluation:* 'The teacher differentiates children on the basis of their intellectual –and often social- skills in preparation for the social and occupational roles which they will eventually play. The appropriate role is teacher-as-judge' (p.15).

When examining the role of the teacher in the context of the school, Hoyle (1969) puts great emphasis on the element of control. He stated, 'the teacher must be able to control his class' (p. 42). The ability to control the class, or in other words, the ability to maintain authority over pupils, was the basic expectation held of a teacher by his/her colleagues and the head teacher, according to Hoyle. Moreover, for him the extent to which a teacher was able to control his/her class determined the extent to which s/he was an effective teacher. Hoyle's (1969) analysis continued with the teacher's role in the classroom. Here, two sets of roles were identified that teachers needed to fulfil in the classroom. These were: instruction, socialization, and evaluation; motivating pupils, maintaining control, and creating an environment for learning. Leadership was also one of the roles Hoyle identified for teachers. The main task of a teacher was to lead his/her students towards learning and behavioural goals prescribed for them or chosen by the teacher (Hoyle, 1969). While Hoyle's analysis is very detailed and acknowledges the teacher's role outside the classroom, it still fails to fully capture the teacher's role beyond the classroom even when discussing it in relation to the wider society.

The teacher's role and the tasks assigned to teachers have been discussed in more extensive ways in recent years. When describing the professional standards of teachers, Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) formulate the following seven principles of professionalism:

- ✚ 'Increased opportunity and responsibility to exercise discretionary judgment over the issues of teaching, curriculum, and care that affect one's students' (p. 20);
- ✚ 'Opportunities and expectations to engage with the moral and social purposes and value of what teachers teach, along with major curriculum and assessment matters in which these purposes are embedded' (p. 20);
- ✚ 'Commitment to working with colleagues in collaborative cultures of help and support as a way of using shared expertise to solve the ongoing problems of professional practice, rather than engaging in joint work as a motivational device to implement the external mandates of others' (p. 20);
- ✚ 'Occupational heteronomy rather than self-protective autonomy, where teachers work authoritatively yet openly and collaboratively with other partners in the wider community (especially parents and students themselves), who have a significant stake in the students' learning' (p. 20);
- ✚ 'A commitment to active care and not just anodyne service for students. Professionalism must in this sense acknowledge and embrace the emotional as well as the cognitive dimensions of teaching, and also recognize the skills and dispositions that are essential to committed and effective caring' (p. 21);

- ✚ 'A self-directed search and struggle for continuous learning related to one's own expertise and standards of practice, rather than compliance with the enervating obligation of endless change demanded by others (often under the guise of continuous learning or improvement)' (p. 21);
- ✚ 'The creation and recognition of high task complexity, with levels of status and reward appropriate to such complexity' (p. 21).

These principles listed by Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) are presented as professional standards for teachers. What I understand by 'standard' is a measure, norm or a model or agreed level of attainment. Indeed, teachers in their everyday work lives practise many of these principles and more as highlighted by Biddle *et al.* (1997, p.2):

It is the teachers who do most of the real work of the school, who bear primary responsibility for instructing the students who constitute the clients of education. And to structure their activities, teachers are given facilities (such as textbooks and classrooms) and are assigned explicit tasks, ranging from responsibilities for reaching curricular and non-curricular goals, to duties associated with maintaining order, protecting the school environment, meetings with parents, leading extra-curricular events, attending outreach activities in the community, and the like.

While Biddle *et al.* (1997), successfully highlight the number of activities teachers are responsible for outside and inside the classroom, they produce an image of teachers as passive recipients of facilities or assigned tasks in their working contexts.

Teacher leadership studies, which ascribe enhanced roles and decision-making powers to teachers (Harris and Muijs, 2003) opens up a new way of looking at teachers and their roles within school contexts. Frost (2012) explains that leadership is not automatically 'linked with positions in the organisational hierarchy of the school. Instead, it recognises the potential of all teachers to exercise leadership as part of their role as a teacher' (p. 210). Some of the teacher leadership roles, as defined by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, pp. 12-13) include:

- ✚ Leadership of students and other teachers: teacher leaders serve beyond the classroom. They act as mentors, peer coaches, teacher trainers, and curriculum specialists and are willing listeners;
- ✚ Leadership of operational tasks: Teacher leaders keep the school organised and move towards its goals. They serve on school boards and committees;
- ✚ Leadership through decision-making or partnership: Teacher leaders participate in school decision-making 'through such roles as school improvement team member, school advisory councils, or steering committees' (p. 13).

In this PhD research, teachers are seen as being responsible for fulfilling a number of tasks in their working contexts, and are considered as being active participants in schools, capable of initiating new ideas and using discretionary judgment. In this research, reliance is placed on Friedman's (1999) prominent study on teacher autonomy in which teacher task areas are divided into the pedagogical and the organizational activities teachers perform in their workplaces. Friedman (1999) criticises the fact that pedagogical aspects of teacher activities are emphasised

more than the organisational aspect and suggests that teachers are generally interested in taking part in decisions affecting the whole school, and that this contributes to advancing their professional knowledge (Friedman, 1999). This leads to a more active image of the teacher. According to Friedman (1999, p.70), the four areas of teacher functioning are:

- ✚ Student Teaching and Assessment: Classroom practice of student attainment evaluation, norms for students behaviour, physical environment, different teaching emphases on components of the mandatory curriculum;
- ✚ School Mode of Operating [referred to as 'School Management' in the current study]: establishing school goals and vision, budget allocations, school pedagogic idiosyncrasy, and school policy pertaining to class composition and student admission;
- ✚ Staff Development [referred to as 'Professional Development' in the current study]: determining the subjects, time schedule, and procedures of in-service training of teachers as part of general school practice;
- ✚ Curriculum development: introducing new "homemade" or "imported curricula" [original emphasis] by the teachers and introducing major changes in existing formal and informal curricula.

Friedman's four areas of functioning, as can be seen, cover a wide range of areas that teachers are involved in in schools and offer a good way of understanding teachers, their roles and the activities they are involved in in their working contexts. None of these are alien to the professional lives of teachers. The work life studies that have been covered so far have already emphasised the place of four areas of

teacher functioning in schools directly or indirectly (e.g. Biddle *et al.*, 1997). These areas are also consistent with the role of teachers in the Turkish context as the policy documents suggest (e.g. MoNE, 1997, 2006, 2007a, 2013a, 2014b; SBEP, 2006). According to the Ministry of Education Primary Education Institutions Regulation, which also covers lower-secondary school education, teachers, for example, are responsible for teaching, assessment of students, and management including taking part in school clubs and committees. MoNE also encourages teachers to take responsibility for their own professional development and work collaboratively with their colleagues (MoNE, 2009a). Additionally, evaluating and developing the curriculum programme is one of the generic teacher competencies published by MoNE in 2006. Hence, this research project investigates the exercise of autonomy by teachers adopting Friedman's four areas of teacher functioning.

To conclude, the chapter has suggested so far that a teacher's work cannot be restricted to the classroom and that teachers fulfil a number of tasks within schools. It has described the nature of teaching and looked at schools and classrooms as teachers' working contexts. Throughout this section, it has been established that both the individual and the relational dimensions of autonomy are applicable to teachers and their working lives. Disregarding one of them would narrow our understanding of the concept of teacher autonomy. In the following parts of the chapter, I will review the literature on teacher autonomy.

3.5 The concept of teacher autonomy

In a literal sense, as discussed earlier in this chapter, autonomy means self-rule. If we took this word for word, then, an autonomous teacher could be defined as one

who created his/her own rules rather than obeying an outside authority. In this definition, the focus is on the teacher as an individual agent, which implies that a person needs complete freedom to be able to create his/her own rules without any coercion from others. Autonomy, however, should not be understood as complete freedom. Because there is no such thing as complete freedom on the part of a person, an institution (Oliver, 2010), or on the part of a teacher.

Freedom is often thought as 'necessary' for the development and the exercise of autonomy, but 'not sufficient' (Dworkin, 1989, p. 60). A teacher can have freedom but this does not mean that s/he is able to exercise autonomy (Helgøy and Homme, 2007). Autonomy involves more than just being free. It requires a capacity for self-reflection, for example about the social context and one needs to be able to step back reflectively from his/her social context and evaluate critically the norms, and standards of that context (Crittenden, 1993) and the opportunities for autonomous action within it. Being autonomous does not mean rejection of the social context or fleeing from the voices of others (Crittenden, 1993). In line with the arguments of relational autonomy theorists (e.g. Tietjen-Meyers, 1987; Mackenzie and Stoljar, 2000), it is possible for teachers to act autonomously without having control over the basic direction of their professional lives. Autonomy for teachers is not utopian, but it is something that they need to claim or in other words something that they need to create spaces for (Anderson, 1987). A number of definitions of teacher autonomy are suggested in the literature. I will begin by reviewing how the term is defined in the language learning field and specifically in ELT, and then move onto describing and critiquing it outside the field of ELT to provide a broader picture of the term.

Language teacher autonomy

Teacher autonomy in the field of ELT has a short history. Almost three decades after the emergence of the notion of learner autonomy, commonly defined as the ability to take charge of one's own learning (Holec, 1979,1981), it has become a focus of discussion. The initial discussions of teacher autonomy were concerned with the role of teachers in non-conventional teaching and learning settings such as self-access centres in which the primary task of teachers was to prepare and support their students for greater autonomy (Benson and Huang, 2008). As a result of a shift in language teaching towards learner-centred models of education, the later discussions have been around the role of teachers in conventional classroom settings where teacher autonomy is commonly understood as professional freedom (Benson and Huang, 2008). A more recent trend in the field has been towards exploring the constraints on teachers' exercise of autonomy in classrooms and the means for developing teacher autonomy such as reflective practice. A short synopsis of these discussions of the concept of teacher autonomy in the field of applied linguistics for language learning and teaching will be provided in this section.

A predominant thread in the discussions about teacher autonomy in this field is the idea that teachers who themselves are autonomous may have a positive influence on the development of autonomy in their students (Little, 1995, 2000; Balçıkanlı, 2009; Little, 1995; La Ganza, 2008; Lamb and Reinders, 2008; Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012; Al-Asmari, 2013). In these studies, the notion of teacher autonomy usually designates a professional capacity, which is developed through self-directed professional development and this is linked to a commitment on the part of teachers to foster learner autonomy in their classrooms (Benson and Huang, 2008). In other

words, the extent to which teachers are able to foster learner autonomy in their classrooms is regarded as an indicator of their own autonomy.

Teachers, however, 'work under conditions in which the control that they exercise is severely constrained' (Benson and Huang, 2008, p. 430). The significance of understanding these constraints on one's practice has been focused on particularly by Lamb (2000), who examined the concept of learner and teacher autonomy within the context of modern language learning in urban areas in England and Wales where underachievement in modern language learning was a matter of concern. Lamb (2000) sees learner autonomy as the key to tackle underachievement and argues that it offers a 'great potential for change' (p. 121). By 'learning how to negotiate their space and find 'voice' [original emphasis] within the constraints that exist in the system, 'individual schools, individual teachers and individual pupils can change the learning environment' (Lamb, 2000, p. 121).

In her work in the Portuguese educational context, Vieira (2003) also emphasises the significance of positively and collaboratively addressing constraints on learner and teacher development as this will improve teaching and learning and will counteract dominant educational practices. In a case study of a school-university partnership, within which the focus was pedagogy for autonomy, Vieira (2003) demonstrates the relationship between learner autonomy and teacher development. In this particular partnership the teachers' struggle to create autonomous learning environments has 'taken the form of collaborative inquiry' (p. 223). Collaborative inquiry is defined by Vieira (2003) as a process which involves the repeated alternation of action and reflection, through which a group of teachers working together tries to understand and solve a particular problem which is important to

them. This means that while addressing constraints that prevent teachers from implementing learner autonomy, teachers are required to be reflective which will then contribute to their own development (Vieira, 2003). Criticality, inquiry, managing constraints, taking initiatives and making decisions, communicating with others, self- and peer-evaluation as well as dissemination of their own experiences are key to reflective teacher development (Vieira, 2003).

Self-reflective practice and its role in the development of teacher autonomy that Vieira (2003) highlighted has also been examined by Huang (2005). Huang (2005) argues that teacher roles now involve sharing power with their learners and providing them with opportunities to take control of their own learning. This can be very challenging for teachers and the extent to which they can meet this challenge depends on the development of their own autonomy as teachers. Huang envisages 'teacher development as a self-reflective process' and sees 'the development of teacher autonomy as an important component of teacher development' (p. 203). Huang (p. 206) defines teacher autonomy as '*teachers' willingness, capacity and freedom to take control of their own teaching and learning* [original emphasis].' According to Huang (2005), action research and reflective practice are two of the main processes that can contribute to teachers' professional development, including the growth of teacher autonomy. Huang examines Exploratory Practice, another form of practitioner research more in detail, as the third major process for the development of teacher autonomy and argues that it has great potential for fostering teacher and learner autonomy. Huang explains that Exploratory Practice is about trying to understand the 'quality of life' (p. 212), as it is experienced by language learners and teachers rather than finding ways to improve it. He, however,

acknowledges that little evidence exists to demonstrate the link between Exploratory Practice and the development of teacher and learner autonomy.

In addition to the works reviewed above, there have also been those in the field who looked at teacher autonomy slightly differently and conceptualised teacher autonomy independently from learner autonomy (e.g. McGrath, 2000; Aoki, 2002; Wilches, 2007; Smith and Erdoğan, 2008; La Ganza, 2008; Huang, 2013; Raya and Vieira, 2015). According to McGrath (2000), for instance, teacher autonomy should not only been seen as a precondition/prerequisite for learner autonomy but as an important element in teacher professionalism. McGrath (2000) provides two perspectives from which teacher autonomy can be viewed: teacher autonomy as self-directed professional development and as professional freedom. In relation to the first of these, teacher autonomy can be defined as 'control over one's own professional development' (McGrath, 2000, p. 100). McGrath gives examples of different strands that may be grouped under this conceptualization of teacher autonomy such as the teacher as researcher, action research, the concept of reflective practitioner and the teacher development movement. When approaching teacher autonomy as self-directed professional development, however, McGrath (2000, p. 101) warns that 'it requires of teachers a certain level of preparedness – attitudinal and technical' and 'an effort and ways of thinking which have perhaps not been required in previous educational experiences.'

In relation to the second perspective, McGrath deals with autonomy as freedom from control by others. A number of constraints on teacher autonomy exist, however (McGrath, 2000). These include 'decisions taken outside the institutions over which teachers will normally have no control', decision made within the institution 'which

the teacher should be in a position to influence', syllabus, examination and textbook.

What is important in this account of teacher autonomy is the way in which the teacher responds to these constraints. The teacher may accept decisions made by others, and implement these in the classroom, or may act self-directedly, exercise independent judgment and find ways to compromise and negotiate.

McGrath reports a case study which involved fifteen primary and secondary school teachers in Hong Kong who participated in an optional module concerned with Materials Evaluation and Design for TESOL. The module aimed to encourage the participants to evaluate textbooks and meet student needs that were not considered by the textbooks by adapting or supplementing the textbooks or designing new teaching materials. A majority of these teachers had been involved in 'group decisions regarding textbook selection, decisions which involved compromise' and their preparation of supplementary teaching materials was mainly limited to photocopying materials from other books (McGrath, 2000, p. 106). According to the results of a questionnaire, completed by the participants at the end the module, the teachers felt better able to systematically evaluate textbooks (n: 15), adapt and supplement materials (n: 15), design teaching materials (n: 13), and write Teacher's Notes (n: 14). Acknowledging the limits of his case study, McGrath is nonetheless keen to insist that this training increased teachers' awareness and criticality, which eventually led to teacher autonomy. This suggests that teachers can learn to be autonomous when given appropriate training.

In line with McGrath (2000), Aoki (2002) argues that 'teacher autonomy is a necessary, but perhaps not sufficient condition for the development and practice of learner autonomy in language classrooms' (p. 124). Aoki's focus has been on

reflective practice which has been assumed to be a tool that helps teachers develop the capacity to create an autonomous learning environment in classes. Aoki (2002) questions this assumption and looks at the relationship between reflective practice and teacher autonomy and whether reflection can really bring about attitudinal change in those who lack readiness for autonomy.

In the first part of her paper, Aoki (2002) offers a provisional definition of teacher autonomy as: 'the capacity, freedom, and/or responsibility to make choices concerning one's own teaching' (p. 111) and later examines this definition in relation to learner autonomy and reflective practice. Aoki suggests that meeting students' needs is one of the components of teacher autonomy and for teachers to be able to do this, they need to be free from constraints. However, 'the micro culture of the teaching environment' (p. 114) may be a hindrance to teachers' efforts. An example of this, provided by Aoki (2002), is a lack of understanding among colleagues. Teachers' number of teaching hours, the number of students in a class as well as other administrative work teachers need to carry out may have a negative impact on their attempts to support each learner's learning process. Aoki reminds us that for a teacher to be able to adopt reflective practice, s/he is required to be committed to teaching. However, when teachers are not allowed to play a role in institutional decision-making, this is likely to hamper their reflectivity. The point Aoki makes here is extremely important. She argues that reflective practice on its own will not change external conditions but teachers can; by acting upon the world and being responsible for their actions. Neither the capacity to foster learner autonomy nor reflection alone is sufficient for its development (Aoki, 2002). Aoki warns that we need to pay more attention to teacher education programmes and that student teachers should be granted freedom and encouraged to think, explore, resist and

rebel against their programmes. Novice teachers' self-efficacy and their relationship to the institution should be given more attention, which would then lead 'to the development of real commitment' (p. 118) and their personal growth must be ensured.

Wilches (2007) is another researcher in the field who approached teacher autonomy from a different standpoint. Wilches argues that teacher autonomy must be studied within a multidisciplinary frame of reference, because of its complexity. However, while examining the concept of teacher autonomy beyond applied linguistics, she fails to link her analysis back to language teachers and only repeats what is already known in the field of general teacher autonomy literature. Smith, on the other hand, whose words inspired the current research project, argues in the opening page of a joint article he wrote with Erdoğan (Smith and Erdoğan, 2008) that we must go beyond our own discourse community, if we want our views on learner and teacher autonomy to be taken seriously. Whilst recognising and emphasising the relatedness of teacher and learner autonomy, Smith and Erdoğan (2008) define teacher autonomy as 'the ability to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes for oneself as a teacher, in cooperation with others' (p. 83). The authors reject the idea that the concept of teacher autonomy should be reducible to a single definition. They identify different dimensions of teacher autonomy within the available literature (pp. 84-85):

- ✚ In relation to professional action: Self-directed professional action (i.e. Self-directed teaching), capacity for self-directed professional action (i.e. capacity to self-direct one's teaching), freedom from control over professional action (i.e. freedom to self-direct one's teaching)

- ✚ In relation to professional development: Self-directed professional development (i.e. Self-directed teacher learning), capacity for self-directed professional development (i.e. capacity to self-direct one's learning as a teacher), freedom from control over professional development (i.e. freedom to self-direct one's learning as a teacher)

Smith and Erdoğan's identification of the dimensions of teacher autonomy contributes significantly to the field, where teacher autonomy is often seen as a condition for developing learner autonomy. In Smith's and Erdoğan's view of teacher autonomy, 'reflection, peer-teaching, criticality, self-evaluation' (p.88), 'self-discovery' (p.93), 'collaboration and guidance' (p. 94) hold an important place. This is partially consistent with the feminist theorist Tietjens Meyers's (1987) conceptualization of autonomy, discussed earlier in this chapter. Tietjens Meyers defines autonomy as a competency, which involves skills of self-discovery, self-direction and self-definition and sees social relationships as necessary to develop autonomy competency. Although Smith and Erdoğan highlight the importance of cooperation with others as an important dimension of teacher autonomy, they retain an emphasis on the self.

La Ganza (2008) is another researcher in the field of ELT, who investigated teacher autonomy whilst maintaining a strong focus on the interdependence of learner autonomy and teacher autonomy. La Ganza explored the constructs of learner and teacher autonomy in the context of classroom-based language teaching. What made her research different from others was her examination of teacher autonomy in terms of teachers' relationships with others. She recognised that teachers' professional relationships with other individuals within the educational or

bureaucratic institution might have an influence on the teaching process, on the teacher's freedom to be creative, on developing and practising ideas and pursuing his or her ideals. According to La Ganza (2008), teacher autonomy is an 'interrelational construct created within four main kinds of relations' (pp. 72-77):

- ✚ Teacher-internal teacher relationships: teachers' on-going inner dialectics with past teachers, mentors, or significant others may liberate or constrain teachers' exercise of autonomy.
- ✚ Teacher and learner relationships: Due to the learner's concern about the learning environment facilitated by the teacher, 'the teacher could be expected to feel more "held" [original emphasis] or supported by the relationships and thus more able to be autonomous' (p. 75).
- ✚ Teacher and institutional relationships: This refers to the relationship between the teachers and their supervising or coordinating teachers and the tension between them.
- ✚ Teacher and bureaucracy relationships: Bureaucracy may influence teacher autonomy. However, through their desire for power/freedom, teachers can subvert compliance and become more autonomous.

In a recent book entitled 'Enhancing Autonomy in Language Education: A Case-Based Approach to Teacher and Learner Development', Raya and Vieira (2015, p.23) propose the following definition of teacher autonomy:

Teacher autonomy is not about being free from external constraints and acting according to one's desires; it is essentially about being willing and able to challenge non-democratic traditions and developing a professional agency in teaching that is directly connected with promoting the learners'

agency in learning. This entails the ability to question reality as we believe *it is* and explore possibilities that make it closer to what we believe it *should be* [original emphasis].

Finally, Huang (2013) who defines teacher autonomy as ‘teachers’ willingness, capacity and freedom to take control of their own teaching and learning’ (p. 44) carried out an investigation into the long-term development of autonomy among prospective student teachers in a Chinese EFL (English as a Foreign Language) university context. Huang explored learners’ and teachers’ understandings of the educational processes in which they were engaged and their interpretations of how the environment they were in influenced their learning and personal development. He also investigated the relationship among agency, identity and autonomy. Huang’s research participants were students in the four-year Bachelor TEFL degree programme. These students would become EFL teachers in primary or secondary school contexts on graduation. Huang’s study documents the development of autonomy by these students, both inside and beyond the classroom across four academic years. In his investigation, Huang brought together the idea of autonomy and the notions of agency and identity and paid closer attention to the learner perspectives on their own learning processes and relevant educational issues.

Huang (2013) found that the following factors were crucial for the development of autonomy within the context of his study (p. 312):

- ✚ ‘Students’ expectation of the teacher’s care and guidance (teacher control) in their personal life domain in addition to learning domain’;
- ✚ ‘Their predominantly extrinsic motivation in EFL learning, and their conscious use of external examinations as a self-pressuring and self

motivating strategy in response to their declining interest in EFL learning’;

- ✚ ‘Their target language difficulty which might obstruct their autonomy but might also trigger their personal agency in EFL and TEFL learning in the long term and’;

- ✚ ‘The matches and mismatches among learner, teacher and institutional agendas (grounded in the existing institutional discourses) and the resulting effect on students’ learning and their personal development’.

The factors that influenced the development of autonomy, Huang (2013) reports, are: contextual, socio-psychological influences on the development of autonomy, and learner readiness for autonomy throughout their four-year TEFL programme. The most significant contextual and socio-psychological factors influencing autonomy included: ‘students’ definitions of teacher-student role relationships; learner motivation; learner difficulty (linguistic and non-linguistic difficulties); and, “sub-cultures” [original emphasis] (e.g., institutional culture, pragmatic discourse, and constrained teacher-educator autonomy, etc.)’ (Huang, 2013, p. 312). In relation to learner readiness, Huang (2013) concluded that what is needed is a shift from learner readiness to multi-agent readiness for autonomy ‘which involves the different parties of at least learner, teacher and the administration in any institutional context’ (p. 310). Furthermore, Huang found a close link between agency, identity and autonomy:

a personally relevant and meaningful agenda might lead to the exercise of agency, which, in turn, might lead to greater autonomy (taking greater control of own learning and personal life) in the long term. Learner agendas

and agency might be deeply rooted in their self-identity conceptualization and construction in terms of future development (including career orientations), and in their general conceptions and interpretations of EFL learning (including their understandings of teacher-learner role relationships) (p. 326).

While making a significant contribution to the field through its examination of autonomy in the long-term, Huang's study is another example of the way in which the conceptualization of teacher autonomy often only appears in the shadow of learner autonomy. The link Huang establishes in his book between personal autonomy and autonomy in language learning and teaching, however, is worthy of note. Based on his findings, Huang argues that 'personal autonomy and autonomy in language learning and teaching are inseparable' and 'that the acquisition of personal autonomy contributed more to the development of autonomy in language learning, instead of the other way round' (p. 318). This suggests that development of learner or teacher autonomy depends on the development of personal autonomy outside the learning and teacher environment.

To conclude, the researchers whose work I have reviewed so far commonly deal with teacher autonomy as a concept that is restricted to the classroom or language related issues. This view of teacher autonomy ignores the fact that the role of teachers, including teachers of English in today's schools, is not confined to the classroom or their subject areas. Within writings on teacher autonomy in ELT, a tendency is noticeable towards seeing the concept of teacher autonomy as a necessary condition/variable for developing learner autonomy. My research, however, explores teacher autonomy in relation to language teaching differently,

and considers it as a workplace construct within and **outside** the classroom.

Language teachers are part of large social organisations – schools – and they will fulfil a number of other duties and responsibilities within schools, in addition to their classroom roles, as other teachers do. Therefore, as stated in Chapter 1 in this thesis, it makes little sense to limit language teacher autonomy to the exercise of discretion or freedom only within the classroom, in relation to the choice of language teaching methods, content, or sources.

Teacher autonomy across disciplines

Outside the field of ELT, the definition of teacher autonomy is no less problematic or free from definitional confusion. There is a very popular tendency to see teacher autonomy as unitary and authors tend to define it using very general terms or words such as discretion (e.g. Boote, 2006), independence and control (e.g. Moomaw, 2005), decision-making ability (e.g. Pearson, 1995; Lepine, 2007). Authors use these interchangeably as equivalents to autonomy. Most of these scholars avoid tightly defining what exactly is meant by power, control or freedom. The point is that these definitions imply that if a teacher is able to exercise power or control, or enjoy freedom in his/her work, then the conditions for being autonomous are satisfied.

Drawing on the discussion of philosophical, psychological, and sociological accounts of autonomy, and on the literature on teachers' work lives, the nature of their teaching, and Friedman's (1999) four areas of teacher functioning, this PhD study defines teacher autonomy as a complex multidimensional workplace construct in which teachers reflectively create spaces for collaboration, taking initiatives and responsibility, using discretion and participating in decision-making in relation to (a) teaching and assessment, (b) school management, (c) professional development,

and (d) curriculum development. This definition encompasses both the individual and social elements of autonomy and takes the discussion on teacher autonomy in relation to language teachers to another level.

In this definition, the term ‘collaboration’ needs some elucidation. From the outset, this thesis argues that teachers do not work in isolation and their exercise of autonomy involves a relational dimension as well as an individual one. It has also been established earlier in this chapter that teachers’ work relations with others can be influential in what they do in schools, the decisions they make or the places they create for autonomy. Thus, this PhD study recognises that collaborative work relations can be important for teacher autonomy. However, the relationship between collaboration and autonomy is one that must be approached with caution because not all collaborative work relationships are spontaneous, voluntary or development-oriented (Kelchtermans, 2006). In some cases, collaboration among teachers can occur as a result of administrative regulations, can be controlled and implementation-oriented and this kind of collaboration may not have any benefit for teacher autonomy (Hargreaves, 1992; Kelchtermans, 2006).

The positive impact of teacher autonomy

Drawing on SDT, the significance of autonomy as a basic human need has been established earlier in this chapter. In line with the insights gained from SDT, it could be said that exercising autonomy is necessary for teachers because it meets a psychological need. The research studies that explored the interrelation between teacher autonomy and several constructs such as motivation, job satisfaction, stress, professionalism and empowerment suggest that autonomy also enhances

task performance (e.g. Coladarci, 1992; Brunetti, 2001; Moomaw, 2005; Pearson and Moomaw, 2005; Sarafidou and Chatziioannidis, 2013). In some of the research studies in the field, autonomy has also emerged as a factor in enabling teachers to increase student success (e.g. Ayrar *et al.*, 2014).

Pearson and Moomaw (2005), in their widely cited paper, provided evidence on the positive influence teacher autonomy has on education. The researchers investigated the relationship between teacher autonomy and the constructs of stress, work satisfaction, empowerment, professionalism, and teaching experience. Pearson and Moomaw surveyed 171 teachers working in Florida. The researchers used Pearson and Hall's (1993) teaching autonomy scale in which teacher autonomy is divided into general and curricular autonomy. General autonomy refers to the 'issues concerning classroom standards of conduct and personal on-the-job discretion' (p.177) and curricular autonomy refers to 'issues concerning selection of activities and materials and instructional planning and sequencing.' Pearson and Moomaw (2005) found that as curriculum autonomy increased, job stress decreased and as general teacher autonomy increased, so did empowerment and professionalism. As job satisfaction, perceived empowerment and professionalism increased, job stress decreased and greater job satisfaction was associated with a high degree of professionalism and empowerment. Pearson and Moomaw concluded that there was no necessary relationship between teachers' exercise of autonomy and their years of teaching experience. Although Pearson and Moomaw's research context is broader in scope than my study, the research findings offer insights into the potential relationship between teacher autonomy and these constructs in other national contexts.

A study undertaken by Sarafidou and Chatziioannidis (2013) on teacher participation in decision-making and its impact on school and teachers produced similar results. The researchers surveyed 143 teachers in Greece in order to assess their actual and desired participation in three domains: student issues, managerial issues and teacher issues. The study findings, which are of relevance to the current study concerned the impact of teacher participation in decision-making on schools and teachers. The researchers found that higher teacher participation was associated with a more positive school climate. It was also found that teachers' participation in decisions pertaining to teacher related issues was the strongest indicator of teachers' sense of efficacy and job satisfaction.

A recent study undertaken in the context of Turkey by Ayrar *et al.* (2014) offers some further insights. Ayrar and his colleagues used the results of countries participating in PISA 2009 (Programme for International Student Assessment) in order to calculate average achievement rates and then surveyed school head teachers in PISA 2009. The researchers found a moderate and statistically significant correlation between overall achievement scores in PISA and teacher autonomy. Ayrar and his colleagues concluded that teachers must be given the opportunity to work within autonomy-supportive environments. In addition to Ayrar *et al.*'s study, the literature on teacher leadership also supports the positive influence of teacher voice, increased responsibility, collaboration, and teacher participation in decision-making on student success. In her review of literature on teacher leadership, Harris (2005) lists improved student outcomes as one of the benefits of teachers having a voice in schools. Similarly, Carl (2009) notes that those teachers who are empowered and actively involved in curriculum development positively influence classroom implementation, thus student success.

However, the link between teacher autonomy and student achievement in particular is one that needs to be approached with some degree of caution. The results of a quantitative study (Martin and Crossland, 2000) undertaken with 271 elementary school teachers in the US found no correlation between teacher empowerment, a closely related term to teacher autonomy, and student achievement. However, it is important to note that Martin and Crossland's analysis of student achievement was limited to students' standardised achievements test scores in reading and mathematics. Moreover, in a journal article published four decades ago, Sa'ad and Hamm (1977) argued that teacher autonomy in schools is desirable because it raises the morale of teachers. However the authors drew attention to the deleterious effects of teacher autonomy as well:

Coordination among teachers is imperfect. Like all professionals, teachers vary in their strengths and weaknesses as well as in their instructional preferences. Most teachers devote more time to activities which they like and in which they are proficient. They spend less time at activities which they dislike and in which their competency is limited. The instruction which takes place in two second grade classrooms, even in the same school may differ substantially (Sa'ad and Hamm, 1977, p. 226).

The authors argue that the consequences of this kind of individuality can be detrimental to the school climate and students. However, the professional self is an important dimension that should not be ignored when examining teachers (Kelchtermans, 1993). Furthermore, not all collaborative teacher activities are development-oriented, voluntary or may have any benefit for schools, as discussed in the previous section (Teacher autonomy across disciplines). However, what Sa'ad and Hamm expresses next about the role of head teachers is noteworthy.

According to Sa'ad and Hamm (1977), head teachers play an important role in capitalizing on the advantages of teacher autonomy. The head teachers can achieve this by encouraging self-reflection and collective decision-making and then monitoring whether (a) individual autonomy fits with decisions made collectively, (b) respects the realities of the classroom situation and (c) helps teachers to meet the expectations of the students (Sa'ad and Hamm, 1977).

In addition to the impact of teacher autonomy on teachers' sense of professionalism, work motivation or satisfaction, a Scandinavian country such as Finland provides a good example of the potential link between teacher autonomy and student achievement. Finland records high academic performances across its schools and is seen as a major international leader in Education (OECD, 2010). The Finnish education system places a lot of emphasis on school and teacher autonomy (Eurydice, 2008). Although the success of the Finnish education system cannot be solely attributed to the extent to which Finnish teachers have professional autonomy, it does appear that a potential link exists between academic achievement and teacher autonomy.

3.6 The research on teacher autonomy

Previous research on teacher autonomy in the field of applied linguistics for language learning and teaching has been reviewed in the first phase of the literature review. When reviewing research studies on teacher autonomy in the second phase, the focus was generally fixed on the studies which:

- ✚ are outside the field of language learning and teaching in order to gain further insights into the concept of teacher autonomy and enrich our understanding of it;
- ✚ include those researching the autonomy of subject teachers but excludes those researching classroom teachers;
- ✚ provide insights into the factors that might be influencing teachers' exercise of autonomy and;
- ✚ explore whether and how teachers cope with inhibiting factors and create spaces for teacher autonomy.

In his article on writing a literature review for educational research, Maxwell (2006) explains that relevant works are not limited to those studies dealing with the research topic. They are the ones that have implications for the research design and conduct as well as the interpretation of the study. Hence in this section, I not only look at those studies which examined teacher autonomy directly, but also review those that explored related concepts such as teacher participation and the use of discretion. This PhD study acknowledges that teaching is highly contextual and the type of factors that inhibit teachers' exercise of autonomy may be similar in a number of contexts but how teachers exercise autonomy in relation to these factors is likely to differ greatly from one context to another. Hence, it is important to look closely at research undertaken in any part of the world and gain insights from these studies. Thus, the review of studies begins with the research undertaken outside Turkey. The studies are presented chronologically.

Research studies undertaken outside Turkey

Smylie (1992) investigated teacher participation and willingness to participate in four areas of school decision-making: personnel, curriculum and instruction, staff development and general administration. 116 respondents teaching in primary, lower-secondary and high schools participated in Smylie's survey study in the context of the United States. The study found that teachers varied in their willingness to participate in different decisions, and the main factor, which influenced teachers' willingness to participate in decision-making was their relationship with their head teacher. Smylie concluded that if the relationship with the head teachers was more open, collaborative, facilitative and supportive, teachers were willing to participate in all decision-making areas. While Smylie's study provides useful insights, willingness is a psychological construct, which is likely to have its own complex properties. Hence measuring willingness only through a 4-point Likert scale, as in this study, may not be sufficient to determine the extent to which teachers are willing to participate in these decision-making areas. Similarly, schools are social settings, hence it can be assumed that teachers' participation in decision-making can be influenced by a number of factors and some factors may be more influential than others. Hence, Smylie's study would have benefitted from a qualitative inquiry in which schools and school decision-making are explored in more depth.

In another study undertaken by Webb (2002) in a Washington elementary school, the presence of a strict accountability system was fiercely criticised. Webb carried out 39 hours of participant observation and 12 semi-structured interviews with five teachers and a head teacher. Webb's findings, despite the small sample size,

exemplified how teachers found ways to exercise autonomy within their classrooms despite the strict state accountability system and mandated curriculum. The teachers exercised power by diagnosing their students' academic and emotional needs and adjusting curricular and assessment directives in ways that would benefit their students. Webb also found that the participant teachers utilised professional expertise, prior teacher education and practitioner inquiry to support their exercise of power. In a qualitative study of eight new and veteran elementary school teachers in New York City undertaken by Bushnell (2003), it was argued that 'the over surveillance of teachers [the monitoring of teachers] and the lack of substantive decision-making' reduced teachers' opportunities for professionalism (p. 253). Unlike Webb (2002), Bushnell (2003) found that teachers in her sample complained about their lack of autonomy, decision-making, and authority, but these did not evolve to action.

Lepine (2007) investigated teachers' perceptions of autonomy at two elementary schools in the United States. The purpose of Lepine's study was to determine factors that influenced teachers' perceptions of their ability and authority to make important decisions regarding their classroom and students. Lepine found that teachers' perceptions of autonomy were not necessarily related to the degree of influence from centralised tests and a standardised curriculum. For Lepine, these were more related to the identities developed by teachers and the role they selected when exercising autonomy. Based on her findings, Lepine argued that two main roles were performed by teachers in state schools when exercising autonomy: the role of ruler and the role of ruled. When the role of ruler was adopted, teachers used four ruler identities as a way to justify autonomous action: the professional, the specialist, the activist, and the critic. Teacher adopted a role of ruled to manage to

construct teacher autonomy for situations where there was little or no collaborative decision-making. The identities of the ruled according to Lepine were: the supporter, the follower, the pacifist, and the novice. Teachers used these identities to construct autonomy and they were constantly evolving. Lepine argued that these role identities gave meaning to the routine of teachers' daily lives and helped them determine how they would interpret various situations. Lepine explains the exercise of teacher autonomy through role identity theory. Although this may sound oversimplified and slightly overlook the role of social structure in the process of identity formation and construction of autonomous action, Lepine's study provides useful insights into one aspect which is of interest to this study: agency.

Helgøy and Homme (2007) in their comprehensive research into the influences of accountability and transparency reforms studied two countries with decentralised education systems: Norway and Sweden. The researchers paid attention to both individual teacher autonomy at the local workplace and collective teacher autonomy at the national level and hypothesized that teacher professionalism should not be understood as individual teachers having a high degree of autonomy in the classroom. The study was a comparative interview study undertaken in two Swedish and two Norwegian cities. The participants in the study included approximately 70 teachers with different qualifications and experiences and head teachers at seven schools. Helgøy and Homme found no correspondence between individual and collective autonomy. For instance, the research findings showed that while the Swedish teachers experienced a high degree of individual autonomy, their influence on national policy was weak. The Norwegian teachers had less individual autonomy but they were still autonomous at the collective level. The researchers concluded that 'autonomy is not necessarily good and control is bad' and that 'control is

sometimes a presupposition for teacher autonomy' (p. 247). This reinforces the idea that teacher autonomy can be possible in centralised education systems.

Although accountability is perceived by some as reducing teachers' exercise of autonomy, as in Webb's study, some research studies provide evidence that there are still possibilities or spaces for manoeuvre for exercising autonomy within strict accountability systems. For example, Benson (2010) interviewed four Hong Kong secondary school teachers and found that schemes of work that were drawn up in the school and which were based on textbooks, curriculum guidelines, syllabuses and public examinations had an influence over the day-to-day decision-making of teachers. However, within these constraints, the participant teachers were still able to create spaces for autonomous action by interpreting, manipulating or ignoring tasks identified in the Schemes of Work. When doing so, Benson argued, individual biographies and identities of teachers constructed over many years of learning and teaching in schools were also influential.

The study undertaken by Gitlin (2011) is in contrast with Benson's findings. Gitlin researched work intensity, teacher decision-making and school knowledge in his case study. Gitlin surveyed teachers working in two schools in the US, observed six teachers during the school year for a total of 36 days and interviewed them at the end of the observations. Gitlin also asked these teachers to keep a journal of their work. The researcher found that the teachers who participated in his study underutilised their autonomy by often following the curriculum, textbooks. He further argued that this limited their ability to incorporate student needs into the curriculum, use a grading strategy which saved time for teachers but distanced them from an intimate knowledge of their students. Gitlin explained that this was a result of the

threat of work intensification, which gradually leads to a decline in professional autonomy.

A study undertaken in the context of the USA by Sparks (2012), who examined classroom and standards-based accountability reform in the American education system in relation to teachers' perceptions of autonomy, supports the view that accountability fetters teacher autonomy. Sparks used four successive sets of nationally representative schools and staffing survey data from 1993-94 to 2007-08 to investigate changes in teacher autonomy over time. Sparks' focus in this study was on classroom autonomy and she did not study the wider context. However, the study is relevant and important because it provided evidence that, over time, teachers subjected to standards-based accountability reforms perceived that their level of classroom autonomy had diminished. Sparks's findings for 2007-08, in particular, revealed that teachers who taught in elementary schools or taught tested subjects perceived their levels of autonomy as lower than those of teachers in secondary schools or who taught non-tested subjects.

Wermke and Höstfält (2014) aimed to develop a model for comparing different forms of teacher autonomy in various national contexts and at different times. The researchers focused on teacher autonomy as a key aspect of the teaching profession and whether this aspect was restricted or extended. The model developed by Wermke and Höstfält included two dimensions: institutional autonomy [collective autonomy at national level] and service autonomy [individual autonomy]. Wermke and Höstfält's study provides critical insights into the concept of autonomy. The authors, for instance, argue that teacher autonomy highlights a crucial dilemma for teachers: 'tension between their work as professional practitioners in the

classroom, and their dependence on organizational structure, such as school and curriculum provided by state governance' (p. 60) and define teacher autonomy as 'the scope of action teachers have to react to this dilemma' (p.60). Wermke and Höstfält draw attention to the contextuality of the profession, and to the fact that the dilemma can be handled in various ways, depending on the time and context.

In three interview studies between 2002 and 2014 in Sweden, Lundström (2015) investigated (a) teachers' understanding and realization of their work and profession in light of recent education policy; (b) the impact of school choice policies and marketization on teachers' work and the teaching profession; and (c) how teachers' work and school cultures are changing and how teachers were responding to the new policy context. Lundström found that (a) most of the teachers who participated in the interviews were aware of an emphasis on autonomy in policy documents, but they were restricted by external pressure, work intensification, resource scarcity and organisational change; (b) school competition and marketization reduced teacher autonomy; (c) in schools now, test results, grades and school rankings define quality and steer the focus of teaching. Lundström concluded that latitude for teacher autonomy always exists and some strong teacher teams had the capacity to exploit it while others did not.

Finally, Xu (2015) undertook an impressive three-year case study of four novice EFL teachers in China in order to explore the impact of teacher collaboration on the development of teacher autonomy and the joint impact of collaboration and autonomy on teacher development. The researcher collected data through 48 individual interviews, 47 journal entries and 26 classroom observation sessions. Xu found that the impact of teacher collaboration on teacher autonomy depended on

the kind of collaboration that was taking place in schools. The researcher identified two types of collaboration: product-oriented and problem-based collaboration. In product-oriented collaboration, either there was no true collaboration or the goal was just to produce teaching resources. In this type of collaboration, the teachers relied on others and this hampered their autonomy. In problem-based collaboration, no help in physical form was available to teachers and the teachers often felt they were on their own. This then led to the development of teacher autonomy. This implies that excessive collaboration where some individuals contribute to the group more than others could be dangerous for the development of autonomy.

Research in Turkey on teacher autonomy-related concepts

Karallı (2003) explored the perceptions of teachers about school head teachers' effectiveness and the levels of teacher participation in school management and their wishes to participate in decision-making. 409 teachers working in Turkish state schools participated in Karallı's study. Karallı found that teachers scarcely ever participated in decisions relating to the management of the school. Experience, age, and school types were the factors, which influenced teachers' participation in decision-making. While experienced and older teachers participated in decision-making relating to teaching and school management issues, less experienced and younger teachers were not willing to engage with these issues. Karallı also found a difference between teachers' willingness to participate in decision-making and the types of schools they worked in. For instance, teachers who worked in primary and lower-secondary schools showed more willingness to participate in decision-making than those in high schools.

In a quantitative study, Aksoy and Işık (2008) explored the perceptions of 358 teachers working in Turkish lower secondary schools in Aydın province in relation to the roles of lower secondary school head teachers. Although this study is not directly related to the concept of teacher autonomy, its findings provide useful insights for this PhD research. Aksoy and Işık found a relationship between the attitudes of head teachers and teachers' willingness to participate in professional development. According to their analysis of the data, head teachers were likely to constrain teacher participation in professional development-related activities because they failed to encourage professional development in their schools. This has implications for the professional development of the head teachers if an autonomous working culture is to be promoted in Turkish schools.

In the first study undertaken in Turkey on the concept of teacher autonomy as a multidimensional concept, Öztürk (2011) examined the new curriculum reform using history teachers working in lower secondary schools and high schools as his focus¹¹. Despite his recognition of teacher autonomy as a broad concept, Öztürk narrowed his focus in his study and mainly looked at the curriculum. He defined teacher autonomy as 'the power and freedom of teachers in the selection of the subjects to be taught, methods and materials to be used in the teaching activities as well as the implementation of the decisions taken' (p. 117). In his study, Öztürk scrutinized old and new syllabuses using content analysis and aimed to determine

¹¹ The curriculum reform Öztürk discusses shares the same goals for each subject taught in Turkey including English. These are the development of student-centred teaching methods, an emphasis on meeting the needs, interests and demands of students and taking diversity into account.

the place of teacher autonomy in the overall goals and principles of the programmes, by measuring the sphere of freedom allowed to teachers in the teaching content and activity planning. Öztürk's study is important because it is another example of how teacher autonomy can be exercised despite the presence of a centralised curriculum. Öztürk suggested that autonomy was a matter of flexibility offered within the curriculum to teachers for exercising discretion and judgment. What Öztürk found was that the new curriculum offered more space for autonomous action to the teachers in the selection and planning of the teaching content, methods and materials as opposed to its predecessors. This, however, as Öztürk stressed, was still very limited and the fostering of teacher autonomy was not one of the explicit and prior objectives of the curriculum reform.

Gülcan (2011) explored the views of head teachers and teachers on participation in decision-making at school meetings in Turkey. His study in particular looked at the level of teacher and head teacher participation in the decision-making in these meetings, and whether there was a difference between teacher and head teacher views in terms of participation in decision-making. Gülcan surveyed 388 teachers and head teachers. The study findings were: (a) the agendas of meetings at school were generally determined by the school head teachers, (b) head teachers were the decision-makers, (c) teachers were willing to attend these meetings and participate in decision-making processes but they thought they had little say in decision-making processes. Gülcan continued reporting that school meetings were generally held if the upper management felt the need and for the reasons of routine rules. The level of participation in meetings was high, but Gülcan thought this might be because teachers were obliged to attend them. Finally, Gülcan found that there seemed to be differences between the views of teachers and head teachers in terms of

participation in decision-making at schools. Teachers argued that there was a lack of a participative managerial approach. Head teachers however thought that the structure was participative enough. This indicates a mismatch between the expectations of teachers from a participative managerial approach and those of head teachers. Gülcan's study would have benefited from a qualitative inquiry into what a participative managerial approach meant to head teachers and teachers and what their expectations were.

In 2012, Öztürk investigated high school history teachers' roles and autonomy in the process of the development of instructional plans and its application. Eleven Turkish teachers of History participated in Öztürk's study. The researcher interviewed and observed these teachers, and analysed their annual instructional plans, history curriculum programme and policy documents relating to instructional planning. Öztürk found that teachers had a limited influence on the preparation of the instructional plans and the contents of these plans were usually taken from the centralised curriculum programme. However, when implementing their plans in the classroom, the participant teachers had a great deal of autonomy in relation to teaching methods and materials and did not necessarily use those that were in their annual instructional plans. Öztürk thinks the overloaded history curriculum is the main factor, which hindered teachers from improving their role and exercising autonomy in instructional planning. While providing useful insights into teacher autonomy, Öztürk is not able to go beyond considering the overloaded curriculum as the main hindering factor and provide explanations as to why the teachers who have the flexibility of using different materials and methods in the classroom do not prepare their own annual plans in line with their students' needs, but instead use the ones taken from the curriculum programme.

In her study, Ertürk (2012) examined the recent changes to the teaching profession made by the ruling party and reported the data obtained from five teachers working in lower-secondary schools about the current status of the teaching profession.

Although Ertürk's study examines the teaching profession in general, the claims she puts forward provide critical insights into the degree of autonomy teachers possess in the country and wider level influences on the exercise of autonomy by teachers.

Ertürk argues that in the age of AKP, the ruling party, neoliberal reforms such as the curriculum reform, performance appraisal and new professional career categories, the introduction of total quality management and the changes in the employment status of newly appointed teachers have intensified with deleterious consequences for teacher autonomy. Ertürk argues that teachers are now monitored more closely and are now accountable to their peers and superiors for the work they do in school.

In a study undertaken by Özkan (2013), participation in decision-making processes, the willingness of teachers to be involved in these and the reasons for their willingness in the context of Turkey were investigated. Özkan surveyed and interviewed 73 teachers. The researcher's focal point in the study was that powerful teachers could lead to powerful institutions, thus teachers needed to be empowered through participatory decision-making. Özkan examined teachers' willingness to take part in the following decision-making areas: Materials selection, timetabling, the framing of school regulations, syllabus design, discipline maintenance, holding teacher meetings, preparations for exams and evaluations, holding parental meetings, improvement of physical conditions, rewarding students and teachers. The researcher found high levels of willingness in each area. In particular, 89.1% of her participants expressed a willingness to be more involved in decisions concerning syllabus design. Reasons favouring involvement included: Teachers are

able to match content, age and cognitive skills; they could easily set up topic priorities; they were willing to take responsibility; they were able to include extra-curricular activities, and they could increase quality in education.

In a quantitative study undertaken to investigate the personal and environmental factors affecting the participation of teachers in professional development activities in Turkey, Bayar (2013) surveyed 525 teachers working in Turkish lower-secondary schools. Bayar found a significantly positive relationship between teachers' attitudes towards professional development activities and their participation in these. Time and personal commitment were identified as factors constraining participation in professional development activities. No significant relationship between teachers' participation in professional development and head teachers was found in the study.

In 2014, Ulas and Aksu undertook a study in order to develop an instrument, which measures the level of autonomy of Turkish classroom teachers. Based on the literature review and according to their view of the teachers' roles and latitude in the Turkish education system, the researchers identified three constructs: autonomy in instructional planning and implementation, autonomy in professional development and autonomy in organisational decision-making. They later excluded autonomy in organisational decision-making because, they argued, this was not an appropriate area of autonomy for teachers in Turkey. Ulas and Aksu tested the instrument by collecting data from 292 classroom teachers working in state lower-secondary schools in Ankara. Based on their analysis of data, the researchers concluded that three areas of autonomy for teachers were available: autonomy in instructional planning and implementation, autonomy in professional development and autonomy in determining the framework of the curriculum. While the study contributes to the

teacher autonomy literature in Turkey, the researchers do not seem to have explored teachers' roles in the Turkish education system fully. As has been demonstrated in this thesis so far, teachers' roles do go beyond the identified areas in Ulas and Aksu's study.

In an interview study, Karakus and Mengi-Us (2014) explored teachers' views about curriculum evaluation – a process, which was viewed by the researchers as directly linked to curriculum development. Eleven teachers working in state lower secondary schools participated in Karakus and Mengi-Us's study. The researchers found that the participant teachers found the curriculum evaluation in Turkey insufficient and that the teachers were interested in and willing to take roles in each stage of the curriculum development. Additionally, in an article published in 2014 in Turkey, Cincioglu (2014) discusses the significance of teacher involvement in the process of curriculum development particularly in relation to language teaching because this can serve as a mean to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Finally, in another study of teachers' attitudes in Turkey, Güçlü *et al.* (2015) investigated teacher participation in school management in lower-secondary schools. 449 teachers and 22 head teachers participated in the study. The researchers used three types of survey in their study: a personality scale, a leadership style scale and a decision-making questionnaire. Güçlü *et al.* (2015) found that teachers did not take active roles in decisions at school level. Head teachers and deputy head teachers were the main decision-makers and they sometimes made decisions on behalf of the teachers. Güçlü *et al.* also found that participatory decision-making depended on the number of teachers working in

schools. The study suggested that participatory decision-making was least likely to be implemented in those schools with a high number of teachers.

As demonstrated so far, the literature is replete with studies that examine the concept of teacher autonomy or related constructs. Each one of these studies gives us valuable insights into the concept of teacher autonomy. However, a detailed analysis of what kind of concept teacher autonomy is; how differently it has been understood and interpreted, how it emerges in educational contexts, and an account of factors that influence these understandings and the actual exercise of teacher autonomy are often lacking in these studies. The teacher autonomy literature would benefit from a new perspective to examine these aspects closely. If we are to enhance knowledge in the field, it is necessary to critically analyse different educational settings in relation to teacher autonomy taking into account the views of various stakeholders. In Turkey, there has been a lack of qualitative research exploring the lived experience of teachers in their attempts to exercise teacher autonomy and examine it as a multidimensional concept.

Furthermore, no study that was available in the literature investigated teacher autonomy taking into account the different perspectives of stakeholders. In this study, I listen to the voices of diverse participants (Turkish teachers of English, head teachers and those working in provincial or district education ministries) in order to understand the deeper structures inherent in the education system in relation to the concept of teacher autonomy. Furthermore, not many studies looked at the policy documents to investigate the place of teacher autonomy in the educational system. In this study, I pay close attention to the educational policy context of Turkey. Finally, when examining the concept of teacher autonomy in relation to English

language teachers, we must broaden our understanding and see teachers of English as part of a larger school life, not merely as individuals whose main duties are to teach English in the classroom. Although within the field of ELT, the concept of learner autonomy has been examined taking individual and social dimensions into account (e.g. Benson and Cooker, 2013), this was not the case for the concept of teacher autonomy. The concept was examined beyond applied linguistics in Wilches's (2007) critical review of studies on teacher autonomy but the author failed to link this review to the particular situation of language teachers. These issues have led to the formation of the following three research questions:

1. How is teacher autonomy understood in Turkish state lower secondary schools with reference to English Language Teaching?
2. According to Turkish teachers of English, head teachers and educational administrators, how does teacher autonomy emerge in these schools, in relation to:
 - a) Teaching and assessment;
 - b) School management;
 - c) Professional development;
 - d) Curriculum development?
3. What are the mechanisms that shape the understandings and exercise of teacher autonomy in the context of Turkish state lower secondary schools with reference to English Language Teaching?

When investigating these questions, I will use the insights gained from the philosophical, psychological and sociological understandings of autonomy and the nature of teaching and teachers' working contexts. I will, in particular, use critical

realism and its approach to the interplay between agency and structure in order to explain how teacher autonomy emerges, and what mechanism shape understandings and the exercise of autonomy by teachers. This is presented in the following section.

3.7 Structure, agency and teacher autonomy: A critical realist approach

The concepts of agency and structure have interested scholars for decades. The question at the centre of debates is whether structure determines agency or agency determines structure. To put it differently, it is whether people make societies or societies make people. While structuralist approaches ignore, for example, the importance of agency in shaping the structure, individualistic approaches underestimate the role of structures in constraining agency. Collier (1994) acknowledges that it is difficult to even make agency and structure engage in debate, because this is 'like Carthage and Rome, it is the war of the whale and the elephant' (p. 143). Anthony Giddens's theory of structuration, Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory or Margaret Archer's social realist morphogenetic approach have been developed as contributions to this debate. The view this research draws on is the critical realist understanding of the relationship between agency and structure, which was developed earlier by Roy Bhaskar, the originator of critical realism. Bhaskar (1998a, p. 216) explains this as follows:

People do not create society. For it always pre-exists them and is a necessary condition for their activity. Rather, society must be regarded as an ensemble of structures, practices and conventions which individuals

reproduce and transform but which would not exist unless they did so.

Society does not exist independently of human activity ... But it is not the product of it.

This is a 'both and' theory, not an 'either/or' one (Collier, 1994, p. 143). The following model illustrates Bhaskar's view of the interplay between agency and social structure:

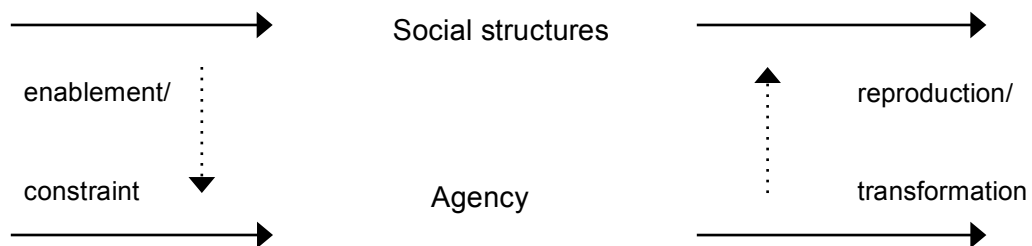


Figure 3 The transformational model of the connection between social structure and agency (Source: Bhaskar, 1998a)

This means that social structures already exist for every individual. Individuals do not create society out of nothing, but instead they modify it self-consciously by reproducing or transforming it 'so as to maximise the possibilities for the development and spontaneous exercise of their natural (species) powers' (Bhaskar, 1998a, p. 217). Danermark *et al.* (2002) suggest that social structures should not be reduced to individuals because they are a prerequisite for human action as they enable actions but 'they also set limits to what actions are possible' (p. 180). Manicas (1998) explains that social structures are both constraining and enabling, 'what one can and cannot do is determined both by existing social structures and, more particularly, by the nature of the social relations defined by the structures and by one's place in them' (p. 321). This model suggests, 'structure and agency are

separate strata' (Danermark *et al.*, 2002 p. 181). Each has different properties and powers, but one is completely necessary for the way in which the other will be shaped. Hence, we cannot simply choose to study only one side or the other, but we need to pay close attention to both sides and the interplay between them (Danermark *et al.*, 2002).

This model makes it possible to analyse the emergence of autonomous teacher behaviour, how it is inhibited or enabled, how structures act on agency and how teachers as active agents create spaces for autonomous action. The model separates structure and agency in a logical way and considers them as two ontologically different – but interrelated – domains of reality with their own properties and powers. The interplay between these two is demonstrated by the dotted arrows in Figure 3. As illustrated, each is completely necessary for the shaping of the other (Danermark, *et al.* 2002).

Within critical realist literature, some variations exist when it comes to defining what agency and structure mean. For some, agency is the internal capacity of social actors to make reasoned choices (Castillo, 2009). The critical realist point of view adds that agents are also capable of reproducing or transforming the existing state of affairs. This suggests that agency should not be understood as an internal capacity, and it is relational, active and reflective. Manicas (1998) explains that agents are capable of 'refashioning' their social contexts 'in the direction of greater humanity, freedom and justice' (p. 322). However, for the agents to be able to achieve this, it is necessary that they see that they have this power, can acknowledge that the present conditions can be improved and they are clear about how things can be improved

(Manicas, 1998).

According to Emirbayer and Mische (1998), agency is a temporal process of social engagement informed by influences of the past, orientations towards the future and engagement with the present. To elucidate this a bit further, it can be said that people take actions based on their past experiences. Teacher beliefs are also part of these past experiences (Biesta, 2015). People's thoughts and actions are reconfigured taking into account their future hopes, fears and desires. Finally, people make choices in the present in negotiation of external demands, quandaries and ambiguities. There is a dynamic interplay between these three dimensions and each dimension varies according to context (Emirbayer and Mische 1998). This then allows both for the reproduction and the transformation of the same structural contexts for action. Archer (1995; 2000) explains agency in terms of the concept of inner dialogue. Inner dialogue is a process that helps agents to act reflexively within the possibilities that exist in the agents' social and material environments so as to bring about changes to their conditions or to reproduce them. Agency is in constant interaction with the social (structure) and is subject to constraints and enablement (Archer, 2000). This makes agency an emergent phenomenon (Priestly *et al.*, 2012). Agency is not achieved simply through reflective inner dialogue, but through reflective inner dialogue based on past experiences, present situations and future hopes and concerns, taking into account structural enablement and constraints.

Like agency, the definition of social structure varies. Porpora (1998) lists four different definitions of social structure: (a) 'patterns of aggregate behaviour that are

stable over time'; (b) 'law- like regularities that govern the behaviour of social facts'; (c) 'systems of human relationships among social positions'; and (d) 'collective rules and resources that structure behaviour' (p. 339). In order to clarify and improve the description of structure within the realist tradition, Elder-Vass (2010) examines the aspects of social structure in Porpora's list. According to Elder-Vass (2010), in the first definition (a), social structures are understood solely as the product of individual behavior. The second one (b) completely disregards the influence of human agency on social structures. The third definition sees social structures as structure-as-relations and the fourth definition denies any real distinct influence to structure. Elder-Vass (2010) argues that social structure needs to be understood as entities with causal powers and sees entity as a stratified ensemble of parts. Elder-Vass (2010, p.50) calls this a laminated view:

Any given higher-level entity, then, can be seen as a pyramid of successively lower-level parts and the causal impact of the higher-level entity as a whole includes the causal impacts of those parts. At each level, the entities formed from the lower-level parts have causal powers in their own right by virtue of how those parts are organised. The total causal impact of a higher-level entity conceived of in these laminated terms, then, includes the impact of all its lower-level parts as well as the causal powers that are emergent at its highest level.

In this thesis, structure [often used interchangeably with 'the social' within this thesis] refers to laying down conditions for people's lives (Danermark *et al.*, 2002) with causal powers (Elder-Vass, 2010). It is the context within which individual agents live and act, subsuming educational laws, government

policies and relationships. We know that social structures already exist for every individual (teacher) and they are the prerequisite for their actions (Bhaskar, 1998a). As indicated previously in this chapter, structures play an important role in the development and exercise of autonomy, thus when researching autonomy we must take into account historical contexts as well as the social relations with which a person is engaged, including the power structures in which one is embedded, and the social environment where one lives (Mackenzie and Stoljar, 2000).

Critical realism offers some flexibility to researchers when identifying the units of structure:

Structures not only refer to macro conditions, despite the fact that much of social science literature gives that impression. We can analyse social structures at all levels and in any area: organization structures, small group structures, the social structures of the dyad or the triad, the structures of street life, communication structures, linguistic structures, personality structures, and so on (Danermark *et al.*, 2002, p. 47).

This PhD research study examines the exercise of autonomy by teachers in the Turkish educational context. Thus, in determining the components of social structures, the question of 'what these laying down conditions are' is important. As discussed since the outset, this study investigates the concept of teacher autonomy both in and outside the classroom. Hence, the context within which this thesis aims to identify social structures includes: the classroom, the school and the educational system as a whole.

A critical realist approach allows us to see teachers as active agents with emergent powers. This suggests that teachers are not powerless. By finding a way to deal with the constraints generated by social structures, teachers can change things. This is how autonomy is seen to emerge in this study and it is at this level that teachers take steps to create spaces for autonomous actions. Thus, it can be said that a critical realist approach to teacher autonomy sees the construct as an empowering mechanism and teachers as active agents.

As indicated previously in this chapter, the feminist authors (e.g. Mackenzie and Stoljar, 2000), who see autonomy as a relational concept offer some insights into the characteristics of agents. They see those agents as being emotional, embodied, desiring, creative and feeling as well as rational. SDT contributes to this by describing agents as inherently active and proactively capable of initiating engagement. Agents' motivational states, dispositions, experiences and orientations and their awareness of what is happening around them (as well as their social contexts) are important within SDT. The critical realist point of view adds that agents are also capable of reproducing or transforming the existing state of affairs. Teachers do not simply react to the enablements and constraints of social structures like 'billiard balls' that are hit (Astbury and Leeuw's, 2010, p. 370). While teachers' work contexts can have a downward causal effect on their behaviour, this does not mean that their behaviour is entirely determined by the school organisation or their role specification, because the causal power of the individual as well as of other factors co-determine teacher behaviour (Elder-Vass, 2010). In other words, it would not be right to assume that teachers behave autonomously when there are enabling conditions and not when there are constraining conditions. They

can behave autonomously if they choose to do so and are subject to the right conditions to enable them to do so or they can choose to create their own opportunities for autonomy by critically evaluating the social structures.

3.8 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has shown that autonomy is a term that has long occupied philosophical, psychological, and sociological theorists. I focused in particular on individual and relational dimensions of autonomy, psychological view to autonomy and professional/work autonomy from a sociological perspective. The nature of teaching and teachers' working contexts were described in order to show how those theories relate to the activity of teachers. The review of studies on teacher autonomy in relation to language teaching showed that, in much of the literature, language teachers' working contexts are widely neglected and perspectives on their exercise of autonomy are restricted to the classroom. However, it is clear that teachers are part of a political world, a world of negotiations, power and struggle. The role of teachers suggests that teachers fulfil a number of roles within schools. These justify an examination of teacher autonomy as a broad workplace construct, both at classroom and school level.

The chapter has also shown that a number of scholars have investigated the factors that influence teachers' exercise of autonomy and related constructs. However, a more robust framework is needed to identify the influential factors that inhibit or enhance teacher autonomy, the nature of these factors and the interplay among them. This chapter demonstrates that Bhaskar's transformational model of agency and structure can be used for the identification of the factors influencing teacher

autonomy and understanding how it emerges. In the next chapter, I will show how I have built on it to attempt to answer the research questions that were identified in this chapter.

4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a detailed account of the methods used when conducting the research, and the rationale for doing so. Section 4.2 describes the ontological and epistemological premises of the project. Section 4.3 introduces mixed methods as the research methodology. Data collection methods are outlined and justified in Section 4.4. Reliability, validity and generalisability are considered next in the light of the chosen research paradigm in Section 4.5. Section 4.6 highlights the ethical considerations and Section 4.7 presents the data analysis procedures. Finally, Section 4.8 concludes the chapter.

4.2 The paradigm that informs the study

A paradigm can be defined as a basic belief system or worldview. Guba and Lincoln (1994) explain that the choice of research paradigm is often influential on the choice of ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods of data collection in a study. The authors define ontology as the form and nature of reality. Epistemology refers to the nature of the relationship between the knower and what can be known. Methodology on the other hand deals with the question of how inquirers can go about finding out whatever they believe can be known. The paradigm that informs this study is critical realism, which is increasingly associated with the British philosopher Roy Bhaskar and was later extended by authors such as Archer *et al.* (1998), Danermark *et al.* (2002) and Sayer (2000). This section introduces some of the key tenets of critical realism, which have been influential in the design and

undertaking of this PhD research study and reviews some of the criticisms levelled at critical realism. Critical realism makes the following three initial claims: there are significant differences between the transitive world of knowing and the intransitive world of being; the social world is systematically open, and researchers need to grasp the ontological depth of reality (Scott. 2010).

The starting point for critical realism is best explained in the words of Mingers *et al.* (2013, p. 796):

Science is not just about recording constant conjunctions of observable events ... [it] is about objects, entities and structures that exist (even though perhaps unobservable) and generate the events that we observe. The form of the argument is a transcendental one. That is, it begins with some accepted phenomenon and asks what the world must be like for this to occur... [These occurrences] necessitate some form of realist ontology. Essentially, there must be some intransitive domain of object and events, independent of our perceptions of them, which can indeed become objects of our knowledge.

Critical realism is developed as a response to the positivist approach and claims that the social world is an open system and that following the principles of natural science when undertaking research into an open system is not possible (Scott, 2010; Danermark *et al.* 2002). Collier (1994) explains that within a closed system, 'a given causal stimulus will always produce the same effect: experiments are repeatable (...) but in open systems, nothing of the kind occurs' (p. 33). If we repeat an experiment following the same protocol, we are able to produce the same results, but the kinds of predictions that can be done in social sciences are not like

the ones done in natural sciences (Danermark *et al.*, 2002). It is because natural science studies its object in a closed system, while social science studies human and social phenomenon, which always occur in open systems and this is governed by mechanisms and emergent powers that operate simultaneously (Danermark *et al.*, 2002). Thus repeated observations cannot explain why or how a social phenomenon occurs (Astbury and Leeuw, 2010).

However, this does not mean that making predictions in social sciences is impossible. Danermark *et al.* (2002), for example, claim that by analysing causal mechanisms it is achievable to conduct a well-informed discussion about the potential consequences of mechanisms working in different settings, which then allows us to make predictions. Critical realism proposes that it is possible to make predictions on the condition that a researcher goes beyond what can be seen and observed and grasps the ontological depth of reality (Scott, 2010). Going beyond means searching for the mechanisms that produce the observable events. To exemplify this, Danermark *et al.*, (2002) use the wage labour structure, which has the causal power to influence us in the society we are in. The authors state that the wage labour structure makes us inclined to reason in certain set ways, and perform certain sets of actions such as wanting a job, looking for a job, getting an education to get a job, or going to work every working day. Danermark *et al.* (2002, p. 56) explain that 'each time someone acts this way, the mechanism that reproduces the wage labour is triggered, which in turn generates new actions of the same kind, and so on'. Finding the mechanism that is triggered each time and the interplay between different mechanisms is the main task of critical realist research (Danermark *et al.* 2002). Mechanisms are not universal laws that apply always and everywhere. Astbury and Leeuw (2010) explain: 'a key contextual aspect of the operation of

mechanisms in the social world is human interpretation of social structures and events' (p. 370).

Finally, critical realism prioritises ontology over epistemology. Key to critical realism is the understanding that reality exists independently of our knowledge of it (Sayer, 1992; Collier, 1994). It is independent, structured and to a great extent the behaviour of this reality makes it inaccessible to immediate observation (Bhaskar, 1978). Reality has powers and mechanisms which we cannot observe but which we can experience indirectly by their ability to make things happen in the world (Danermark *et al.*, 2002). There are three levels to reality. These are the real, actual and empirical as illustrated in the following diagram (Recreated using Bhaskar's three ontological domains, 1978, p. 130).

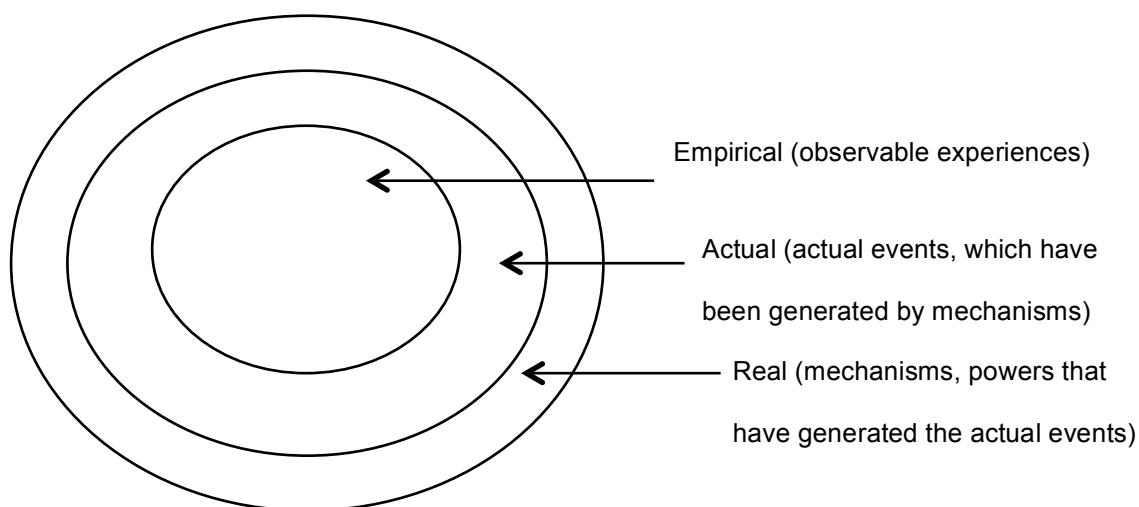


Figure 4 Three levels of reality in critical realism

The empirical domain is comprised only of experiences and observation, but not all events are experienced (Collier, 1994; Danermark *et al.*, 2002). Thus, the empirical domain can be described as one where events happen whether we experience them or not. However according to critical realism what happens in the world is not

the same as that which is observed. Danermark *et al.* (2002) explain that empirical observations, data or experiences are theory-laden and seldom objective and 'they always comprise earlier, more or less hidden, everyday and/or scientific conceptualizations' (p. 17). From a critical realist perspective, this is called the epistemic fallacy: 'statements about being can and will always be analysed as or explicated in terms of statements about our knowledge of being' (Bhaskar, 1998b, p. 642). This makes the empirical world 'misleading' (Danermark *et al.*, 2002, p. 21). Reality has a deep dimension, as illustrated in Figure 4; this is why it cannot be reduced to observation of phenomena at the empirical level. This suggests that if we want to acquire usable knowledge, then it is essential that we explore the causal mechanisms within the non-observable level of the real that generate events at the level of the actual and which can be observed at the empirical level.

So, critical realism argues that 'the explanation of social phenomena by revealing the causal mechanisms which produce them is the fundamental task of research' (Danermark *et al.*, 2002, p. 1). The nature of the social world is complex and within it, a number of causal mechanisms reinforce each other or frustrate manifestations of each other, such as the interpretations of each situation made by each individual constantly interacting with it (Danermark *et al.*, 2002). The important point that needs to be highlighted is that the effects of the mechanisms are subject to change and 'the same mechanism can produce different outcomes according to its spatio-temporal relations with other objects, having their own causal power, and their own liabilities, which may trigger, block or modify its action' (Sayer, 2000, p. 15). This means a certain object tends to act or behave in a certain way (Danermark *et al.*, 2002).

Critical realism is a well-founded social theory (Collier, 1994), however a number of criticisms have been levelled at it. For instance, it is harshly criticised by Magill (1994) who insists that the theory claims to provide guiding principles for social science and by Hammersley (2009) who questions whether critical realism justifies critical social research and how critical it really is. These will be discussed at the end of this thesis. Drawing on critical realism, this study aims to identify deeper structures or mechanisms that shape the understandings and exercise of teacher autonomy in the Turkish context, taking English language teaching as its focus. The next section explains how a mixed methods approach was employed in order to achieve this aim and gives a detailed account of the methods being implemented in the study including the rationale for their use.

4.3 Research methodology

Broadly speaking, there are three methodological movements in the social sciences (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010). These are quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies. The quantitative research movement is associated with the positivist tradition and primarily looks at numerical analysis. It is based on observations that are converted into discrete units that can be compared to other units by using statistical analysis (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). According to the positivist paradigm, there is only one truth, an objective reality that exists independently of human perception (Sale *et al.*, 2002). The qualitative movement is linked with the constructivist and interpretivist traditions. According to these, there are multiple realities or truths based on one's conception of a reality that is socially constructed and constantly changing (Sale *et al.*, 2002). Epistemologically, this suggests that there is no access to reality independent of our minds (Sale *et al.*, 2002). Hence,

narrative data is of more interest to qualitatively oriented researchers. It generally examines people's worlds and actions in narrative or descriptive ways while closely representing the situation as experienced by the participants. The differences between the two movements have been immensely debated, in particular with respect to philosophical positions (Lund, 2012). The differences between quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Bergman, 2008, pp. 13-14) are presented in the following table:

Quantitative research
A belief in a single reality
The possibility and necessity of separating the knower from the known
The possibility of generalizing findings beyond the contextual limits of the researched units and research situations
The attempt to identify universal, causal laws
The tendency to work with large, representative samples and an emphasis on deductive research
Qualitative research
A belief in a constructed reality, multiple (constructed) realities, or a non-existent reality
An interdependence between the knower and the known, i.e. the impossibility of separating the researcher from the research subject
The inadvertent value-ladenness of the research process and its output, i.e. the impossibility of conducting research and interpreting research findings objectively
The centrality of the context to the research process and findings, e.g. time- space,

politics, the specific situation during data production, interpretation, presentation
The impossibility of generalizing research findings beyond the limits of the immediate context

Table 3 Quantitative research versus qualitative research

At first sight, it seems that the characteristics of one methodology are in complete opposition to the other but Bergman (2008) invites researchers to become suspicious of such clear and clean distinctions reminding us that the research process is complex, messy and compromise-laden and the divide between quantitative and qualitative methodologies is based on highly questionable premises. The distinction between the two methodologies has been relentlessly discussed, supported or rejected with the birth of mixed methods.

The mixed methodology approach blends both quantitative and qualitative methods and has become a rapidly growing field of social science methodology. This approach has also been used by some researchers in the field of autonomy in language learning and teaching (e.g. Sert, 2006, Lepine, 2007, Borg and Al-Busaidi, 2012). Given the distinction between quantitative and qualitative movements, there have been many debates on mixing methods. One of these is the incompatibility thesis, which asserts that quantitative and qualitative research is based on different assumptions and therefore integrating the two methodologies is not appropriate (Guba and Lincoln, 1988). The mixed methodology approach rejects the incompatibility of methods thesis and offers an alternative point of view: the compatibility thesis. The compatibility thesis supports an alternative pragmatist view that paradigms must demonstrate their worth in terms of how they inform successfully employed research methods (Howe, 1988). That is, the pragmatists'

orientation is more towards solving problems rather than ontological or epistemological assumptions. Similarly, Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) argue that quantitative and qualitative methods are appropriate in many research settings and denying this is epistemologically incoherent.

Like the pragmatist paradigm, critical realism finds the incompatibility thesis constraining (Danermark *et al.*, 2002) and argues that, if taken seriously, research in social sciences can be either positivist or interpretivist/constructivist. However, unlike pragmatism, critical realism supports the view that the concepts of reality cannot be separated from the methods (Danermark *et al.*, 2002). Such a separation is an illusion, stress Danermark *et al.* (2002) and one cannot escape the ontological-methodological link. So, critical realism is open to mixing methods in a study and sees that it is profitable to combine methods in practical research work. However, it emphasises that this should not only be governed by the research questions but more importantly by the ontological perspective:

The decisive question is how different methodologies can convey knowledge about generative mechanisms ... mechanisms are regarded as tendencies which can be reinforced, modified or suppressed in a complex interaction with other mechanisms in an open system. The result may be that they cannot always manifest themselves empirically. In addition, the motive for action is regarded as a causal mechanism beside others, which makes the traditional division between a quantitative and explanatory methodology on the one hand, and a qualitative and understanding methodology on the other hand, limiting and misleading (Danermark *et al.* 2002, p. 163).

However, restating the distinction between open and closed systems, which was

referred to earlier in this chapter (Section 4.2), Danermark *et al.* (2002) argue that quantitative methods require a closed system. This does not mean that critical realism is completely against quantitative approaches. Instead, it urges researchers to be very observant about what conclusions can be drawn from such analysis.

Mixed methodology can be defined as ‘the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study’ (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17). The advantages of using a mixed methodology approach to research have been well documented. Leiber and Weisner (2010), for example, explain that qualitative and quantitative methods employed simultaneously or sequentially, are of great value in bringing a wider range of evidence to strengthen and expand our understanding of a phenomenon. The authors continue:

Triangulation, expansion, depth, and completeness of evidence from various methodological approaches encourage greater confidence in scientific conclusions for both producers and consumers of research findings. From a practical perspective, having various types of evidence at hand enhances any researcher’s ability to discover, understand, and communicate findings to a wide range of audiences. The major challenge is to identify and implement appropriate, effective, and efficient methods that will produce meaningful results that can be communicated in clear and compelling ways to those audiences (Leiber and Weisner, 2010, p. 560).

There are a number of typologies of mixed method designs in the literature and this makes it very complicated to determine how to blend both quantitative and qualitative methods in a study. In the ‘Sage Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social

and Behavioural Research' (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010) for instance, more than 40 types of mixed methods designs can be found. These include: sequential explanatory, sequential exploratory, sequential transformative, concurrent triangulation, concurrent nested, and concurrent transformative. Creswell *et al.*, (2008, p. 68) also identify four basic types of design. These are: Triangulation (conducted concurrently), embedded (either concurrently or sequentially), explanatory (sequentially), and exploratory (sequentially).

One of the reasons why there are so many mixed method designs is that each design is shaped according to the needs of a particular research project and the phenomenon under investigation. That is, there is no single mixed method design but its principles seem to have been adapted in many different ways. In this research, I use a sequential triangulation method. Morse (1991) brought the typology of sequential triangulation into the mixed methods field. According to Morse (1991), these projects are conducted one after another to further inquiry, with the first project informing the nature of the second project. What Morse suggests may seem to imply that the main research design involves only the first phase of the study and depending on the results, the nature of the second can vary accordingly. However, each PhD research study begins with a well-outlined research design. In the case of my own research, the design enabled me to be flexible in reshaping it. When needed, I re-evaluated the next research phases and modified the kinds of questions that could be asked of the research participants in the light of the data collected from them in the previous stages.

Furthermore, it is important to clarify what is meant by triangulation, which is often referred to as validity checking, a tool that can reduce the chances of reaching false

conclusions (Hammersley, 2008). Triangulation as validity checking implies that there is one single reality and that it is knowable (Hammersley, 2008). However, reality has ontological depth:

You do not realize that an empirical connection in itself cannot identify the active mechanism or mechanisms, nor does it contribute to any profounder information about the interaction of the forces behind an observed pattern (Danermark, et al., 2002, p. 153).

In this study, triangulation is not used as a tool for validity checking. It is used to compare and contrast data drawn from different sources to identify mechanisms in the Turkish education system, in relation to teacher autonomy within English language teaching. As suggested by Sobh and Perry (2006), I see triangulation as a tool that provides a family of answers:

Different triangulation sources will provide different perceptions, but those different perceptions should not be considered to be confusing glimpses of the same reality, rather they should be considered to foster understanding of the reasons for the complexities of that reality (Sobh and Perry, 2006, p. 1200).

This study aimed to explore the understandings and exercise of teacher autonomy in Turkish state lower secondary schools with reference to English language teaching, and what might be the mechanisms that shape these.

This research shares the view that combining quantitative and qualitative research can reveal contrasting dimensions of the phenomena under investigation, and as a result increases the depth of understanding of it. Thus, the sequential triangulation

method provided this research with the flexibility of employing as much direction as needed depending on the results of the first phase. The following diagram shows the sequential triangulation research design adopted:

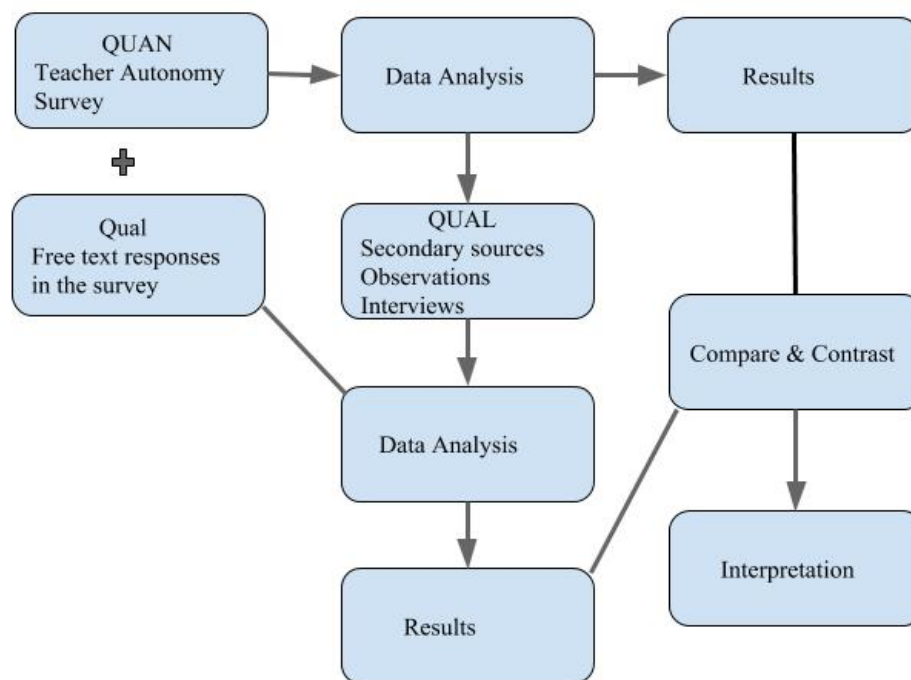


Figure 5 Research design

As discussed in the previous section, critical realism assumes a stratified ontology and this is divided into three domains: the real, the actual, and the empirical. This illustrates the view that there is a reality independent of our knowledge of it, but that this reality is not something immediately fixed or empirically accessible or observable. Reality has a dimension where one can find mechanisms, which produce empirically observable events. Therefore, when using mixed methods with a critical realist orientation, one must be very careful about making claims about the advantages and purposes of mixed methodology. Taking the discussion presented

so far into account, the reasons for using a mixed methodology approach in this study, as suggested by Zachariadis *et al.* (2013) are as follows:

- ✚ Complementarity: gaining complementary views about how teacher autonomy is understood and exercised and what shapes these;
- ✚ Completeness: ensuring as complete and detailed picture as possible of the concept of teacher autonomy in the context of Turkish state lower secondary schools in respect of English language teaching;
- ✚ Developmental: Inferences arrived at using one type of research method serve as questions for another type of research;
- ✚ Expansion: Providing explanations or expanding the understanding obtained using other research methods;
- ✚ Balance/Diversity: The weaknesses of one method can be compensated for by the use of another and their respective strengths can be utilized;
- ✚ Diversity: Obtaining divergent views on the same phenomena;
- ✚ Contextualisation: Using one method in order to recruit participants for the next phase(s) of the study. (I, for example, selected my observation participants and interview informants among those who had already completed the questionnaire);
- ✚ Triangulation: comparing and contrasting data drawn from different sources for the purposes of gaining more insights into identifying mechanisms that exist in Turkey in relation to the exercise of teacher autonomy.

Having described the purposes of using a mixed method research design, in the next sections data collection methods and procedures will be described.

4.4 Data collection methods

In my research I used four data collection methods. These are; a survey questionnaire (Section 4.4.1), documentary analysis (Section 4.4.2), observations in schools (Section 4.4.3) and interviews (Section 4.4.4). The rationale for the choice of each method and data collection procedures are explained below.

4.4.1 Survey questionnaire

There are two reasons why a survey questionnaire is used in this study. Firstly, it allowed me to ask all the participants the same questions quickly and efficiently in a short period of time. Secondly, the data obtained from the questionnaire survey was used to contextualise the next phases of the study: observations of teachers' daily work, both in the classroom and at school level, and follow-up interviews.

Friedman's (1999) Teacher Work-Autonomy Scale was adapted in this study. In the teacher autonomy literature, two well-known instruments, designed primarily to measure teacher autonomy can be found. These are; Charters's (1976) Sense of Teacher Work Autonomy and Pearson and Hall's (1993) Teaching Autonomy Scale. Charters's scale is designed according to the understanding that teacher autonomy means freedom from any external interference, pressure and control. This PhD study, however, regards autonomy as an empowering construct in which teachers can create their own spaces within the constraints present in their working context. Pearson and Hall (1993) divide teacher autonomy into general and curricular autonomy. As explained previously in the literature review chapter (Section 3.4), general autonomy refers to the 'issues concerning classroom standards of conduct

and personal on-the-job discretion' (p. 177) and curricular autonomy refers to 'issues concerning selection of activities and materials and instructional planning and sequencing.'

Friedman (1999) however argues that teacher autonomy is usually considered by many scholars as 'a shield against external pressures such as distrust, strong influence, control, excessive organizational demands, and pedagogical limitations' (p. 59). For him, 'the concept of teacher autonomy includes being able to initiate ideas and activities and being involved in major school policies and practices' (p. 59). Friedman stresses the fact that as well as pedagogical aspects of the teaching profession, teachers' contributions to the decision-making processes of the school are very important when measuring teacher autonomy, because schools are the teachers' work environments and they are members of these large organisations. In Teacher Work-Autonomy Scale, Friedman focuses on both inside (pedagogical) and outside of the classroom and school (organisational). I opted to adopt the Teacher Work-Autonomy Scale because its conceptualisation of the construct appears to encompass the concept of teacher autonomy fully, as suggested by other researchers, such as Strong (2012).

The questionnaire (Appendix 1) is composed of four main sections. These deal with teaching and assessment, school management, professional development, and curriculum development. There were 28 questions in the main sections of the questionnaire: teaching and assessment (9), school management (7), professional development (6), curriculum development (6). In order to enrich and explain the quantitative results in the words of participants, four free-text response boxes were incorporated at the end of each section. Furthermore, the last section of the

questionnaire invited respondents to participate further in the study. The questionnaire was administered in English, as the questionnaire respondents are English teachers with high proficiency levels in English as a foreign language. Respondents were asked to enter their free-text responses in either Turkish or English. The purpose of offering a choice was to elicit more extensive responses by enabling them to choose the language they felt most comfortable with.

The survey questionnaire was piloted in February 2014. 21 English teachers participated in the pilot phase. Four sets of responses were discarded as incomplete. The purpose of piloting the questionnaire was to determine:

- ✚ Whether the wording of the survey was clear for the participants;
- ✚ Approximately how long the survey took for the participants to complete;
- ✚ Whether any questions were hard to understand;
- ✚ Whether there was anything that needed to be done to improve the quality of the questionnaire.

Hence the respondents were asked to comment on these issues at the end of the questionnaire. Among 17 respondents, 12 made comments. All 12 respondents found the wording very clear. It appeared that the questionnaire took them 10-15 minutes to complete. Three of them said that they had difficulty in understanding the fifth question of the 'professional development' section in which the acronym for the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) was used. Although the first question in the first section explained what MoNE stood for, the acronyms were not used in the main study in order to avoid any confusion.

Additionally, in the pilot study, no demographic information about the participants was collected. However, some demographic questions were included in the main study. The participants were asked to state gender, years of teaching experience and the year groups they worked with. This was done for the purpose of obtaining more information about the participants when determining the sample size in the next phases of the research. Piloting the questionnaire was useful in identifying difficulties that might be faced when distributing and collecting questionnaires for the main study. The initial plan was to distribute the questionnaire with the help of a provincial directorate of the Ministry of National Education. However, the help offered by some of the directorates contacted was very limited. Hence, in recruiting the respondents for the main study, the email list of the English Language Teachers' Association (INGED) in Turkey was used. INGED has a total 2700 members, of whom 300 are particularly active and renewed their membership in the year of conducting the survey. Additionally, the survey link was shared on a site with a group called English Language Teachers in Turkey (ELT in Turkey). It must be noted that both INGED member and the members of ELT in Turkey group may already possess a degree of autonomy and therefore may not be representative of the English language teachers nationwide.

In conducting the survey questionnaire, Survey Monkey, an online survey tool, was employed because of its ease of use (Marra and Bougue, 2006). The survey questionnaire went online on 11 November 2014. INGED members were invited by email to participate in the study twice. The first invitation was sent on 13 November 2014 and the second on 07 December 2014. The link was also shared twice with the English Language Teachers group. 97 Turkish teachers of English participated in the study, however 9 sets of responses were discarded as incomplete. Thus the

total number of English teachers surveyed was 88. According to the latest statistics obtained from MoNE, the number of English teachers working in primary, lower secondary and high schools in Turkey is 63,619 at the time of writing. The information as to how many of these teachers work in lower secondary schools has not been retrievable.

4.4.2 Documents

A number of official documents and few newspaper articles were used in this study. The selection and collection of these documents began in the very early phases of this study and lasted until the data analysis was completed. Documents can provide information about the settings being studied, or about the wider contexts, and particularly about key figures or organisations (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Sometimes this information will be of a kind that is not available from other sources. On other occasions, they may corroborate or challenge information received from informants or from observation. Documents have served a number of purposes in this PhD study. They, for instance, provided information on the Turkish education system, the roles of teachers, and the way school operates. Documents also guided the later stages of the study. Information obtained through documents suggested some questions that needed to be asked as part of the research. They were also used as supplementary data and provided valuable insights into the understanding of the context and the concept of teacher autonomy within the context. Documents provided a means of tracking change within the Turkish education system. Finally, documents were used to triangulate findings from other sources.

The documents used in this study can be found in the following table:

Document title	Source
Legislation for in-service teacher training	MoNE (1995a)
The regulation on working hours	MoNE (1998)
The directive of total quality management and implementation	MoNE (1999)
The regulation on school libraries	MoNE 2001(b)
The regulation on social activities	MoNE (2005c)
The regulation on advising and guidance in primary education	MoNE (2005d)
Competency framework	MoNE (2008)
The regulation on portable equipment	MoNE (2007b)
The English language teaching curriculum	MoNE (2006), MoNE (2013a)
The directive on inspection of cafes at schools and rules for maintaining hygiene	MoNE (2007c)
The school-based professional development handbook and MoNE directive about teacher competencies and school-based professional development model	MoNE (2007a) and MoNE (2009a)
The regulation on the role and duties of school inspectors	MoNE (2009b)
Newspaper articles	Doğan (2012), Türkiye-Eğitim. (2013)
The regulation of family and school collaboration	MoNE (2012b)
Regulation on textbooks and educational materials	MoNE (2012a)
The fixed timetable for English lessons (Year 8)	MoNE (2013c)

The regulation on primary education institutions (2014) ¹²	MoNE (2014b)
The regulation on the appointment of school head teachers	MoNE (2015c)
Needs analysis survey	Conducted by MoNE in 2014
Directives	
Directive no 68128140/480/2463603	MoNE (2013b)
Directive No: 86839228/820/4775294	MoNE (2014d)
Directive No: 1761900-200-E.10452928	MoNE (2015b)
Directive No: 76198665/115/305476.	MoNE (2015a)
Directive No: 12949659-115.99-E.10444637	MoNE (2016d)
Directive No: 76198665/806.99/8731485	MoNE (2016e)
Directive No: 76198665/806.99/8494194	MoNE (2016f)

Table 4 The list of documents analysed in this study

This study recognises these sources as an important part of the Turkish education system. Each document provided the study with a vast amount of information about the way the education system operates, including power relations and decision-making procedures in the system. Although documents are important ways of gaining insights into the research contexts and the phenomenon under study, it is important to remember that all the documents listed above were produced for some purpose other than research. They do not provide direct answers to the research questions. Each was used to explore the context in relation to the concept of

¹² The regulation on primary education institutions covers school levels including kindergarten, primary (years 1,2,3, and 4) and lower-secondary schools (years 5,6,7 and 8)

teacher autonomy and guide the research phases employed. Another important point about the use of documents in a study is that some documents, which are of importance to the study, may not be accessible. The 1997 curriculum document, which was discussed in the literature review chapter, for instance, was not retrievable despite two official applications made to MoNE. Although this can be considered a drawback of using documents as a source of research data, this does not rule out the benefits of documents to a study, as discussed above. The fact that the 1997 document was not retrievable provided some insights about the Turkish education system and helped me develop a critical eye to the reasons why this was not accessible and how alternative information could be obtained.

4.4.3 Observations

Observation is another data collection method employed in this study. Three English teachers working in three different state lower-secondary schools in a central Anatolian province were observed. The length of observation was 17 hours 40 minutes; each teacher was observed for a working day. Observation is a very important mode of data collection because it allows the observer to see, hear, smell, touch or even taste the context and it helps the observer to understand the true situation in the context under investigation (Foster, 1996). One might question, however, whether relatively short periods of observation such as these, really have the potential to provide the opportunity to see, hear, smell, touch or taste the lives of English teachers in the Turkish lower-secondary school contexts and then understand whether or how the participants exercise autonomy. The observation study was piloted prior to the main study. An English teacher was shadowed for two days. My pilot field-work suggested that schools are dynamic social settings and

three days of observing when combined with other sources of information, such as informal conversations, and documents would provide a sufficient amount of (good quality) data. Another reason for preferring shorter observation periods is to make the data analysis process more manageable (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). The length of observations can also be justified from a critical realist point of view. According to critical realism, all observations are fallible regardless of their length. Hence the rationale behind carrying out observations with three English teachers was to compare observational data from different settings. My role in this research phase was primarily to observe teachers' work both in the classroom and in the school environment in general. The observations did not involve any interaction with the students.

Participants were selected among those who completed the questionnaire and opted for further participation. The total number of participants who volunteered for the observation study was 26. However, only 20 of them left their contact details, names and the city in which they live and work. The volunteers were from eight different provinces and initially visiting different cities in order to carry out the observation study was considered. However, the Turkish educational system is highly centralised and it was thought that this would give me the licence to concentrate on only one of these provinces. The hypothesis was that within centralised educational systems, the geographical differences would not be very influential on the exercising of teacher autonomy. The number of English teachers needed for the observation study was three. This would allow me to compare observational data from different settings. Hence all the other provinces, which had fewer than three potential participants, were ruled out. When choosing the province,

convenience and accessibility were the determining factors. One of the provinces with more than three potential participants was chosen.

In order to build rapport, the participants were called by telephone to thank them for their interest in the study. Later, text messages were exchanged and decisions were made as to when to meet and when to begin the observation study. This gave the potential participants an opportunity to ask any questions and learn more about the project. Next, those who were selected and had agreed to participate in observations were visited in their schools and permission to observe them was requested from their head teachers. In Turkey, access to schools is easily provided to researchers if MoNE's permission is obtained beforehand. As the participants had already agreed to the observations and MoNE's permission was granted, none of the head teachers objected. The focus of my observation was divided into two areas: classrooms and other parts of the schools, such as staffrooms, kitchen, or corridors. My intention was to use a semi-structured observation sheet in the classroom (Appendix 2) and record the amount of space the teachers offered to their students for autonomous action. However, I soon discovered that the observation sheet distracted from the data collection immensely. Instead of focusing on what was happening in the classroom, I was overly occupied with writing my field notes in the right boxes in the observation sheet. I, then, stopped using the observation sheet and recorded everything that was relevant to the concept of autonomy, such as the roles the participant teachers adopted in the classroom or the interaction between teachers and students.

I shadowed the teachers through their daily routine in other parts of the schools to gain a better understanding of the school climate, for example; interpersonal

relations, norms of behaviour, styles of leadership within the context under investigation, sense of belonging, or job satisfaction. For that reason, during my observations I focused on the following points:

- ✚ Events or activities in which the participant teachers were involved;
- ✚ Daily activities (routines) and informal conversations;
- ✚ The kinds of tasks the participants were assigned to carry out outside the classrooms;
- ✚ Their attitudes towards these tasks;
- ✚ Staff notice boards;
- ✚ The kinds of relationship between the participants and their colleagues, social interactions, examples of cooperation or possible power struggles, unsupportive behaviours;
- ✚ Examples of interaction between the participant teachers and the school head teachers.

Looking at teachers' daily routines or their relationships with others gave some indications of the extent to which teachers of English in Turkey exercise autonomy in their workplaces, which will be further discussed in the following chapters of this thesis. These points were also helpful in documenting the opportunities and constraints that exist for autonomous action within the Turkish context.

I took an approach to observation outside the classroom similar to those in ethnographic studies, which gave me more flexibility in collecting data. Flexibility here, however, should not be mistaken for selectivity; by flexibility I mean that I used various ways of recording data. Foster (1996) draws attention to the fact that

observations are inevitably filtered through the interpretative lens of the observer.

Fowler (2009, p.14) further argues that:

Observers inevitably select what they observe and what observations they record. They also interpret what they see. The observer's existing knowledge, theories and values will inevitably influence the data they produce and the accounts and evaluations they produce. The danger is that this may introduce biases and inaccuracies into their work so that invalid, and therefore misleading, descriptions, explanations or evaluations are produced.

During the observation study, I recorded anything that was happening around me and looked at the records I had made, in order to better understand the context in relation to the concept of teacher autonomy (Appendix 11). In three days of observing for example, I spent a considerable amount of time in classrooms. There were short breaks after each class. In these breaks, I recorded everything that occurred in the vicinity in detail. When the environment was not convenient for making notes, I entered brief notes into my diary so that it was easier for me to remember afterwards in order to write my observations up in detail.

Observation by itself may give only a partial view of behaviour and it is important to collect further information from other sources to make sense of the data received (Foster, 1996). Therefore, between observations, I started informal conversations with the teachers whenever possible and necessary. The initial plan was to digitally record all the informal conversations depending on which part of the school I was in. I believed it might be inappropriate to use a digital recorder in the staff room, as compared to a photocopy room for instance. However, my experience proved that

using digital recorders during an informal conversation was counter-productive. As soon as the recorder was switched on, the conversation became more formal so I relied on handwritten notes throughout all the conversations. In addition to selectivity, I was also conscious about the issue of reactivity, which can be defined as conscious or unconscious change in the way participants or the school community behave in the process of being observed. Reactivity when left unmonitored may lead to inaccurate assessments or findings (Hammersley, 2003). However, I was aware of the fact that my presence might influence the way the participants behaved, hence I used this awareness when analysing my data.

Overall, observation proved to be a very useful method in this study. Observation helped me familiarise myself more with the current context of state lower secondary schools in Turkey. It also offered me the opportunity to identify or reformulate the kinds of questions I could ask during interviews as part of my sequential triangulation research design. Moreover, by using observation I did not rely solely on what participants told me about their work in questionnaires or interviews. As observation involved me as the researcher noting down what I saw as it occurred, the accuracy of the data produced improved.

4.4.4 Interviews

The last data collection method used in the study was interviews. Interviews were conducted one-to-one and face-to-face in the same province in which the observation was conducted. The number of participants interviewed was 14: five

English teachers, three head teachers and six¹³ educational administrators. The rationale for this number was governed by the need to collect in-depth data within the time constraints of the study.

Through critical realism which this study takes as its philosophical base, it was necessary to include other stakeholders in addition to actual teachers of English in order to understand various aspects of teacher autonomy within the context as understood by these diverse participants. English teachers were selected for interview among those who completed the questionnaire survey and stated their willingness to participate further. Three of these interview informants had previously been observed. The head teachers and educational administrators were approached in person. All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed as soon as possible afterwards.

Three models for interviews exist: the unstructured interview; the semi-structured interview; and the structured interview (Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003). An unstructured interview enables the researcher to establish areas of interest but the interviewee normally guides the discussion of these issues. This kind of interview is thought to be difficult to steer if the discussion deviates from the key subject matter. The semi-structured interview allows for more flexibility. Questions are usually predetermined, though there is sufficient flexibility to allow the interviewee the opportunity to shape the flow of information. The structured interview, on the other

¹³ The number of educational administrators interviewed initially was two. However, the data particularly about the focus group meeting reports was inconclusive, therefore further interviews were undertaken with four other educational administrators in a district directorate.

hand, gives the interviewer control over the order of questions, all of which are predetermined.

The interview model used for this study was semi-structured, which allowed me to combine open and closed questions. Using this model, data was elicited in greater depth by asking additional questions and allowing the interviewee flexibility in answering the questions. It also gave me an opportunity to ask follow-up questions about the responses to questionnaire items given by the English teachers. Hence, it was consonant with the mixed methods research approach used for this study (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010). The interview questions were evaluated in terms of content validity and clarity of the items and the questions were piloted. Prior to the main study, the questions were revised one more time.

All the interviews were conducted in Turkish. Initially it was planned to offer the English teachers a choice about which language to use during interviews, Turkish or English, in the hope of eliciting more extensive responses by enabling them to choose the language they felt most comfortable with. However, considering the fact that not all head teachers or educational administrators would be speakers of English, I decided to conduct all the interviews in Turkish to avoid any issues resulting from use of different languages during the data analysis process.

Therefore, prior to the interviews, sample interview questions (Appendix 3) were translated into Turkish and a translator and a Turkish bilingual academic checked the accuracy of the translated questions.

Interviews are thought to be a very good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, and definitions of situations and constructions of reality (Punch, 1998). It is also thought to be one of the most powerful ways we have of understanding

others (Punch, 1998). However, there is no consensus on the use of interviews as a window on the world and/or on the mind of informants (Hammersley, 2003).

Hammersley (2003) reviews some of the criticism about interviews, such as the issue of how we would know the informant is telling the truth or the difference between what people say and what they do. Hammersley (2003) argues that it is wrong to conclude that what happens in interviews carries no reliable implications about people's attitudes, and perspectives. He instead calls the researcher to consider more carefully what interview data can provide, what it cannot provide, and what other sources of data might be needed to evaluate the findings.

4.5 Reliability, validity and generalisability

The concepts of reliability and validity were developed in the natural sciences and therefore they are often discussed in relation to quantitative research (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). However, regardless of their very different epistemological basis, the issues of reliability and validity can have value in determining the quality and sustainability of both research approaches (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; Hammersley, 2008). Reliability is defined in many different ways. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) define reliability as 'the replicability of research findings and whether or not they would be repeated if another study, using the same or similar methods, was undertaken' (p. 270). When understood simply as replicability of research findings, reliability seems like a concept that is more applicable to quantitative research, which deals with numerical data. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 292) use the terms 'dependability', 'stability', 'consistency', 'predictability', and 'accuracy' when defining reliability and suggest a number of ways for improving the reliability of an inquiry. In critical realist research, Sobh and Perry (2006) explain that replication refers to the choice of

cases where the results are expected to be the same or different. This implies that a careful choice of cases [the term 'case' refers to the unit of analysis, and is not limited to case study research] should be made so that they either produce predictable results, which the authors refer as 'literal replication'; or contrary results for predictable reasons, that is, 'theoretical replication' (p. 1203).

Reflexivity, which refers to self-awareness/critical self-reflection on potential predispositions, is very important in improving the reliability of research with a critical realist orientation. Thus, in this study, in order to ensure reliability, I explain my ontological and epistemological position explicitly and recognize my own limits as a researcher. I describe all the procedures followed when collecting and analysing data, including how different themes were derived and give detailed information about the participants in the following chapter. In addition to these, the fact that all interviews were electronically recorded and transcribed; field notes were kept and recorded systematically, and notes were put in writing during the data analysis process add to the reliability of this study. In the interviewing and observation phases of the study, I aimed to build the same level of rapport with different participants. During interviews, for example, using the same interview protocols helped achieve this.

Validity, on the other hand, concerns whether the findings or conclusions of a study are true (Hammersley, 2008). From a critical realist perspective, this definition is problematical because according to critical realism, reality exists independently of our concepts and knowledge of it and this reality is not accessible to immediate observation. However, this does not mean that validity has no place in the critical realist position. According to critical realism, even though the reality is not

transparent, 'it has powers and mechanisms which we cannot observe but which we can experience indirectly by their ability to make things happen in the world' (Danermark *et al.*, 2002, p. 20). The purpose of research, from a critical realist perspective, is to 'investigate and identify relationships and non-relationships, respectively, between what we experience, what actually happens, and the underlying mechanisms that produce the events in the world' (Danermark, *et al.*, 2002, p. 21). This suggests that in critical realism, the issue of validity can be discussed in relation to the generative mechanisms in the domain of the real that cause the actual events we encounter in the empirical domain.

In addition to these, when considering validity issues in this study, I refer to its other forms, which are concerned with plausibility, credibility and defensibility of data.

Burke (1997), for example, differentiates between three types of validity. The first is descriptive validity, which refers to 'the factual accuracy of the account as reported by the researcher' (p. 284). In this study, this was achieved through triangulation of data. The second is interpretive validity which 'requires developing a window into the mind of the people being studied' and refers to the degree that the participants' viewpoints, thoughts, intentions and experiences are accurately understood and reported' (Burke, 1997, p. 285). In order to achieve interpretive validity in this study, many low inference descriptors (precise descriptions from the interviews) were used when reporting findings. The readers are allowed to hear the participants' exact words in direct quotations. The last one is theoretical validity, which refers to 'the degree that a theory or theoretical explanation fits the data and is credible and defensible' (Burke, 1997, p. 286). An extensive review of literature across disciplines was undertaken in order to achieve theoretical validity. Self-awareness of my personal disposition and being open to any emerging information, which was likely

to disconfirm my expectations, was also beneficial.

In addition to the issues of reliability and validity in research, it is also important to consider generalisability. All science should make generalising claims, Danermark *et al.* (2002, p. 73) state and continue, 'methods for acquiring knowledge of the general and for examining the validity of generalisations are fundamental for all social science research. Generalising may, however, mean different things.' The authors identify two different ways of defining generality:

- ✚ The empiricist concept of generality: 'Reality is a question of how large a group of events or other phenomena an empirical observation can be generalized to. In this case generalisation is an extrapolation. Knowledge of a limited amount of events is extrapolated to, and is assumed to be valid for, a larger population' (p. 76). This concept of generality excludes the domain of the deep structures of reality.
- ✚ The realist concept of generality: refers to transfactual conditions (deep structures), to the more or less universal preconditions for an object to be what it is (p. 77).

In critical realism, what is important is to move from surface to depth. In other words, it entails a move from the domain of the empirical to the domain of structures and mechanisms when making generality claims. It is because, as Danermark *et al.* (2002) highlight, deep structures and mechanisms are the conditions for something to be what it is and not something completely different. The authors claim that these deep structures can be more or less general. This study is concerned with exploring how teacher autonomy is understood and exercised and investigating the deep structures which shape the understanding and exercise of teacher autonomy. In this

study, I recognize that the concept of teacher autonomy and its exercise in the Turkish context may be viewed differently from the perspectives of different agents involved in the education system including teachers, head teachers and educational administrators. In order to ensure reliability and validity and increase generalizability, I take these different perspectives into account.

4.6 Ethical considerations

In collecting the data, I drew on the 'Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research' of the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2004) and followed all the necessary ethical procedures stated in the Open University Code of Practice for Research (The Open University, 2013a). In compliance with the Data Protection Act, I submitted the 'Data Protection Questionnaire' to the Open University Data Protection Coordinator on 10th December 2013. No data protection issues were found with the type of data I was collecting. Following this, I obtained official approval from the Open University Human Participants and Materials Ethics Committee on 17th December 2013 (Appendix 4). The General Directorate of Innovation and Educational Technologies in Ankara granted me permission to conduct the study in Turkey on January 14, 2014 (Appendix 5 & 6). The participants in this research agreed to participate by informed consent (Appendix 7). I guaranteed the anonymity of participants, and the thesis does not contain any names of schools, settings or practitioners. I made no payments and participants were able to opt out of the project at any point before the anonymisation process starts in June 2015. All potential participants were given a sufficient amount of information about the study (Appendix, 8).

Conducting research in any field can be ethically challenging. When undertaking interviews, for instance, I came across an ethical issue twice. This issue occurred when the first two interview informants wanted me to turn the recorder off before vouchsafing a 'sensitive' piece of information (sensitive in the view of the interviewees). One of them especially was very concerned about what he was going to say being recorded and said the following: 'If they come to know that I am telling you this, they [meaning the authorities in MoNE] would cut my head off.'

In each instance, the data produced was highly relevant to what I was researching and I had to make a difficult decision afterwards whether to record the data in my diary, or not. I opted not to use any of this information in the study. I, however, contacted the interviewees a while after the interviews and asked if I could use the information in my study reminding them that their anonymity was guaranteed. The informants agreed.

Another ethical issue was encountered when recruiting educational administrators. My initial plan was to interview at least three educational administrators, however my experience proved that this was not an attainable goal. In my first attempt, I went to a district directorate of MoNE. I booked an appointment to see the district director. The director was interested in my research, but told me that I should speak to one of the unit heads. After spending hours meeting many unit heads, one of them agreed to meet me two days later in his office. The name given to this informant for the purpose of this study is Hakan. On the day of interviewing, Hakan left his office door open. This allowed his colleagues to enter the room to ask him work-related questions, or take his signature for paper work. The interview was interrupted five times, because the interview was carried out in his office hours. This might have

some influence on his responses to the interview questions and was something that I needed to keep in mind while analysing the interview data.

In order to recruit the other educational administrators, I visited a provincial directorate. I met a head of unit whose name was given to me by Hakan. The head of unit was very friendly and hospitable and showed great interest in my research. He agreed to be interviewed, but did not want to be digitally recorded. I sensed that his reluctance was due to the very recent release of recordings of private conversations of politicians, media executives, bureaucrats, businessmen and many others in Turkey in the time of meeting him. He appeared to be very uneasy about the idea of being digitally recorded. He advised me to visit the governor of the province and present a petition to the governor for using the device within the directorate. As soon as I left the provincial directorate, I headed to the office of the governor of the province which was only 10 minutes walking distance. I wrote the petition and this was approved and signed by the deputy governor the same day. The next day, I visited the provincial directorate again to meet the same unit head. He looked at the approved petition and apologised that he was still apprehensive about being recorded. I had very limited time left and booked an appointment to see the deputy director next day.

When I arrived in his office, I introduced myself and explained why I was there. He said that he was too busy to be interviewed but phoned another department. This was what he said in that phone call: 'Ünal [anonymised for the purpose of this research], a PhD student from a UK university will be coming to interview you.' I was utterly surprised, but felt that it would not be appropriate to talk to the deputy director about the ethics of research. Instead, I headed to Ünal's office to apologize and

cancel the meeting. Ünal was not as surprised as I was and welcomed me to elaborate on what I was researching. His interest grew because he was coming from an English language teaching background. I insisted that I was ready to cancel the interview and keep it between us. However, he replied: 'It is true that it was not a request but an order from my deputy director. I agree to be interviewed not because I was ordered to do so, but because I am very interested in your research and I will be happy if I can be of any help.'

4.7 Data analysis

Data analysis is one of the most interesting phases of undertaking research. Some define this process as making sense of data (e.g. Glesne and Peshkin, 1992), others as locating meaning in data (e.g. Guest *et al.*, 2011). I would describe it as connecting to the data or to the minds of those who are speaking to you by listening carefully in order to achieve research aims. The process of data analysis begins at a very early stage (Glesne and Peshkin, 1992; Kuckartz, 2014). For me, for example, it began when I downloaded the first policy document from MoNE's website. This was well before I put my questionnaire survey online and continued when I received the first questionnaire response and when I shook hands with the first interview participant. When conducting my observations, I was not just collecting data. I was trying to understand the context of why and how things were happening the way they were as I made my field notes. The rest of this section will describe the processes of data analysis.

The data analysis procedures

I analysed data obtained from documents, items in the questionnaire, free-text questionnaire responses, field notes and interview transcripts separately. In analysing Likert-type data obtained from questionnaires, I used the following steps suggested by Creswell and Clark (2007): preparing the data for analysis, exploring and then analysing the data. For the purposes of preparing the data for analysis, I exported the data from Survey Monkey to Excel. However, there were many unwanted variables that Survey Monkey added to the excel file. These were 'respondent id', 'collector id', 'start date', 'end date', so these columns needed to be cleaned before taking the next steps. I initially considered making two copies of the excel file and deleting free text responses from one of them. The idea was that once exported into SPSS, the data would look tidier. However, having two copies would complicate the further stages of data analysis. Hence, I kept all the free text responses in the file. The next stage was importing the data into SPSS, the statistical analysis software.

Importing an excel file into SPSS is a straightforward process, however all the data imported was in string format (e.g. Gender: Male and Female). This needed to be changed into a numerical format, so I assigned numeric values to each response (e.g. Male: 1, Female: 2 or not at all: 1, occasionally: 2, undecided: 3, frequently: 4, always: 5) and then added labels accordingly. Exploring data required a visual inspection of the data followed by descriptive statistical analysis to determine general trends. This included calculating minimum and maximum values, means and standard deviations (Creswell and Clark, 2007). Screening the data through descriptive analysis helped build an honest data analysis (Tabachnick and Fidell,

2007). Before moving to the analysis stage, I needed to check the data set for any missing data. The final phase involved analysing demographic data by using descriptive and frequency analysis. Later the frequency values of each question in the four main sections of the questionnaire (teaching and assessment, school management, professional development and curriculum development) were calculated. Next, I employed a correlation test in order to check whether there was any relationship between gender/years of experiences of teachers and their responses to the questions. Each question in the questionnaire was analysed individually. A partial view of SPSS coded data can be found in Appendix 9.

In order to examine the qualitative data and to prepare it for meaningful interpretation, I used thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) define thematic analysis as a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data. Thematic analysis helps identify not only the surface meanings of the data, but also the features that gave the data that particular form and significance. Hence, thematic analysis is a useful data analysis method that can be used within a research study with a critical realist orientation. The analysis moves far beyond a frequency count of words or phrases. It involves more involvement and interpretation from the researcher (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Guest *et al.* (2011) explain that the goal in thematic analysis is 'a skilful expedition executed with forethought, appropriate tools, and systematic planning prior to entering unexplored terrain' (p. 49). What they emphasise here is that it is important to begin the analysis well prepared and organised.

In analysing qualitative data, I adapted Braun and Clarke's (2006, p. 87) guide where the data analysis process is divided into six phases. These are: familiarising

yourself with your data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, producing the report. As the authors state, these are not rules for doing thematic analysis and these six phases can be applied flexibly according to the needs of a particular research project. I followed a retroductive strategy throughout the whole process. Retroduction refers to advancing from one thing (empirical observation of events) and arriving at something different (a conceptualization of deeper structures) (Danermark *et al.*, 2002, p. 96). As discussed in this thesis, critical realism has a layered ontology and it is important to go beyond what is observable in the data. Retroduction was used to uncover what is not observable or hypothesize how the observed events can be explained.

The following diagram presents the thematic analysis procedure I followed in this study illustrating the process using a spiral image. This suggests that the process of data collection, data analysis and report writing are interrelated, took place simultaneously and required movement in analytic circles throughout the process rather than using a fixed linear approach (Creswell, 2007). The first and lowest loop in the spiral shows the beginning of the analysis.

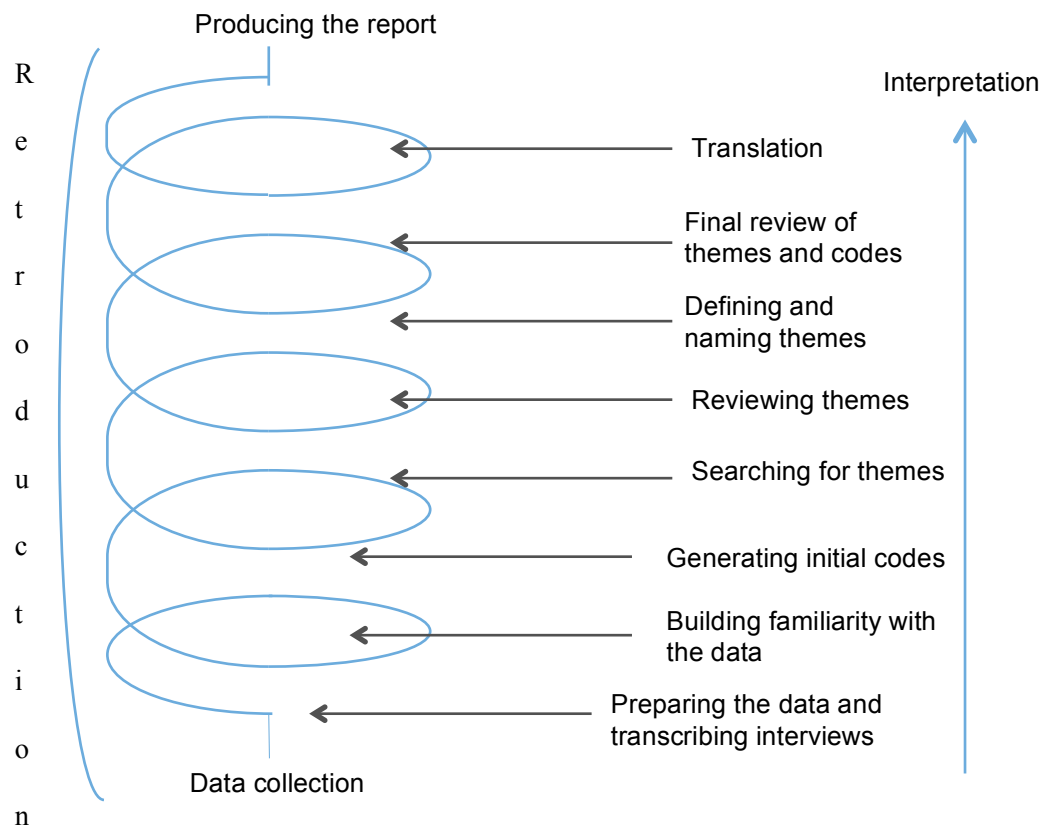


Figure 6 The stages of thematic analysis adopted in the study

The initial data analysis began during data collection. This involved gathering documents and looking at them with a critical eye, writing notes about the data collection process, any dilemmas I encountered or any observations I made which would help me understand my data better in the later stages. I then arranged all the documents that needed to be analysed in a folder. Comments were inserted in the first page of each document which explained the reasons why the document was important and required analysis. This phase continued until the whole data analysis was completed.

Preparing and exploring the data for analysis also included transcribing the interviews and reading through the transcripts several times in order to build

familiarity. The transcription process began as soon as possible after each interview was conducted. Transcription included references to non-verbal data when necessary. This process was quite time-consuming and in order to shorten it I tried a few dictation apps. As I listened to the interviews, I dictated the words. Only after a few minutes, I noticed that as I was dictating the words and sometimes sentences, I was not connecting to the data. From my previous research experiences, I knew that the process of transcribing data was an important part of data analysis, which needed to be done carefully. As I listened and dictated, I had lost the ability to understand the meaning of the words. I was simply typing what I heard. I decided to stop and go back to the traditional transcription method. I listened, stopped, thought and typed. As I typed, if any idea or question emerged, I made notes. This process continued by reading through field notes several times and organising free-text responses and keeping them all in a Microsoft Word document while maintaining the information about the sources for each comment. In analysing qualitative data, I used qualitative data analysis software, called Nvivo 10. Nvivo provided me with a portable space where I could organise and store the data and the materials and by doing so save time. For that reason, preparing data for analysis involved importing data into Nvivo and organizing Nvivo folders according to the sources uploaded:

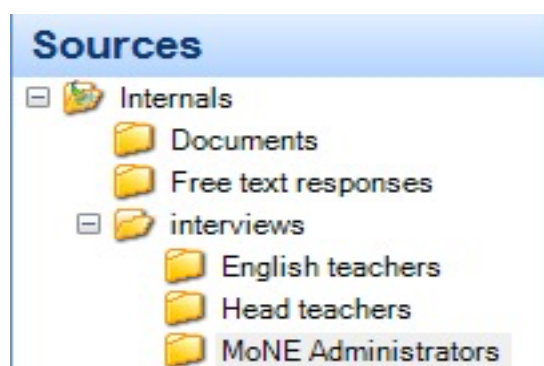


Figure 7 Nvivo folders

The next stage involved data categorisation and coding. This is a critical stage because the researcher's own bias or values may corrupt or influence the process. Sobh and Perry (2006) acknowledge that one must always aim for value-awareness rather than value-removal. I have briefly described why and how I developed an interest in the concept of teacher autonomy at the beginning of this thesis. Throughout the data analysis, I constantly interacted with the literature. I also explicitly explained my worldview at the beginning of this chapter. These demonstrate my awareness of my own values and prove that my value-awareness minimised any bias that might influence the data analysis process.

In analysing the data, I used a multi stage process of categorisation and coding (Kuckartz, 2014). At stage one, I read (a) teacher interviews, (b) head teacher interviews and (c) interviews with educational administrators respectively. The data was then coded roughly using categories derived from the literature, research questions and survey questionnaire for a, b and c separately. However, I was open to any other code emerging from the data. During the coding process, I worked through the text line-by-line from beginning to end and assigned text passages to categories. Some of the text passages included multiple topics; hence they were assigned to multiple categories. The more I got involved in the data, familiarised myself with the tool and coding process, the more coding and analysis as an on-going process grew in sophistication in the second stage of qualitative data analysis. Finally, I ran a third analysis and the categories and sub-categories were further developed, revised and prepared for reporting (Appendix 10: Screenshot of Nvivo Teacher Interview Open Coding).

The same process was employed for the analysis of free-text responses obtained from the survey questionnaire, documents and field notes with one exception. In analysing the field notes, I carried out a manual analysis and highlighted notes. I analysed transcripts in the language of the interviews, which was Turkish as suggested by Twinn (1998). The advantage of carrying out the analysis in Turkish was that I was familiar with the language and this helped the codes and themes emerge organically.

After I finished creating codes and themes, I began translating the interview extracts and free-text responses. This was another time-consuming but necessary activity. Hence, I considered working with a certified translator based in Turkey and contacted three different translation companies. A sample text was sent to these companies. The level of quality was concerning, hence I translated all the coded teacher interview extracts myself. A random selection of 10% of the translations was then sent to a colleague working in the English Language Teaching department of a Turkish university to ensure validity. No major issues with the translations were found. In line with the Open University's guidelines for use of foreign language content (The Open University, 2013b), the main text of this thesis gives all the quotations used in English, with respondent (source) codes (e.g. DEq1 for Derya's quote no 1, Uq3 for Ünal's quote no 3). Some of the statements that might be potentially harmful to teachers who contributed, especially in the light of recent political developments were anonymised (e.g. Source Code: AnonymisedQ1, Source Code: AnonymisedQ2). Appendix 12 includes all the quotes used in the thesis in the original language, with the respondent source code and page numbers in the thesis.

4.8 Chapter conclusion

This chapter presented the paradigm that informs this study: critical realism. It introduced and discussed the choice of a mixed methods approach as a suitable research approach. This study investigated the concept of teacher autonomy in the Turkish context with reference to English language teachers. The study aimed to reveal as many contrasting dimensions of teacher autonomy as possible in order to increase our depth of understanding of it. Hence, a mixed methodology approach, which allows a combination of quantitative and qualitative research was the most suitable research approach in this study. Section 4.4 gave a detailed account of methods used when conducting this research including the rationale behind the choice of these methods. Each data collection method has its own limitations and these were discussed in the chapter. What this research paid particular attention to was reducing the weaknesses of one method by the use of another method. The issues of reliability, validity and generalisability were the main focus of Section 4.5. These were explained from a critical realist perspective. Ethical considerations and the data analysis procedures were described in chapter 4.6 and 4.7. In the next chapter, the study findings are presented.

5 Findings

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of this PhD research study. Section 5.2 deals with the survey findings. This begins by a description of the demographic characteristics of survey respondents (Section 5.2.1). Survey findings are organized around four headings, which match the headings used in the survey questionnaire: teaching and assessment (Section 5.2.2), school management (Section 5.2.3), professional development (Section 5.2.4), and curriculum development (Section 5.2.5). The response frequencies of each item under the main headings in the survey questionnaire are presented in the form of figures. Section 5.3 continues with the presentation of findings from documentary analysis, observation and interviews drawing as appropriate on the survey data. This section begins by introducing the observation (Section 5.3.1) and interview participants (Section 5.3.2). Section 5.3.3 provides an overview of how teacher autonomy was defined by the interviewees. Main themes emerging from the study are presented in Section 5.3.4. Finally, Section 5.4 concludes the chapter.

5.2 Survey findings

5.2.1 Demographic characteristics of survey respondents

The number of survey respondents is 88. Of these, 74 are female and 14 are male (Figure 8). Female English teachers are unsurprisingly overrepresented in the

sample. It was known in the early stages of the research design that women were overrepresented in the English language teaching profession in Turkey. The latest statistics, available from MoNE on request, confirm this. According to the statistics, the total number of English teachers working in Turkish state schools is 63,619¹⁴ Of these, 16,448 are male and 47,171 are female. In the previous chapter, a reference was made to the work of Pearson and Hall (1993) who found no correlation between teacher autonomy and gender. Hence, it was not one of the primary aims of this study to achieve an equal number of respondents of each gender, but in order to have more control over the next phases of the study, the survey questionnaire collected data about gender. Figure 8 shows the gender ratio of survey respondents and their years of teaching experience:

¹⁴ No statistics is available based on school levels. 63,619 is the number of English teachers working in state schools in Turkey including primary, lower-secondary, and high schools.

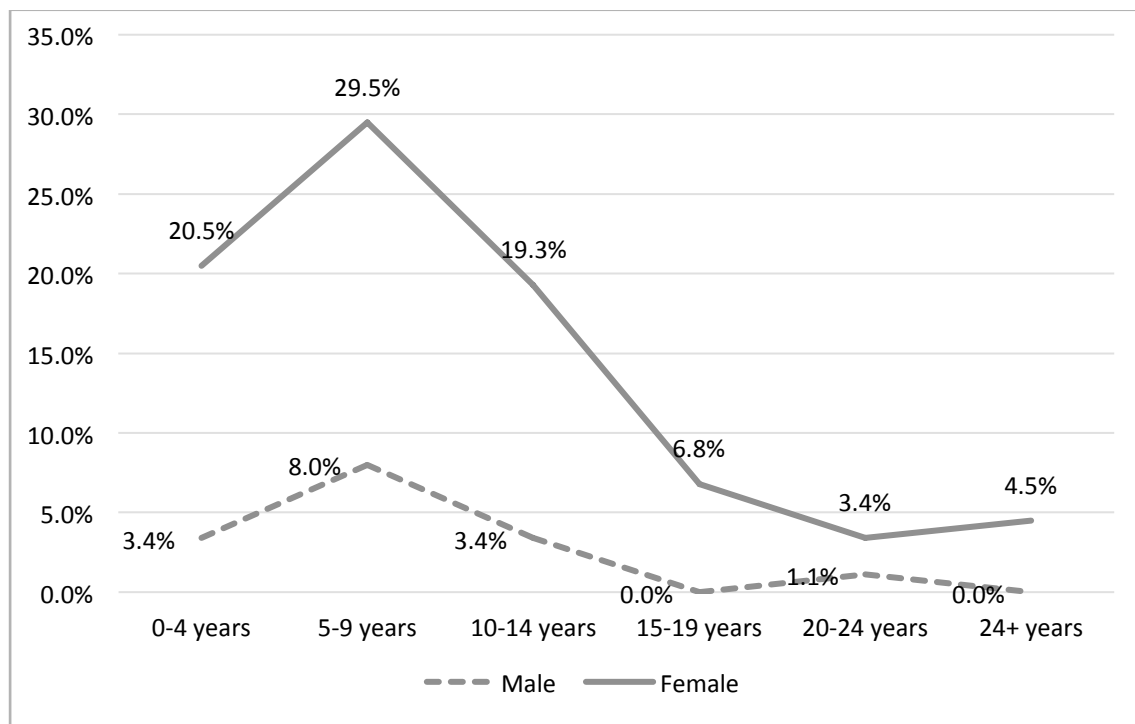


Figure 8 Gender ratio of survey respondents and years of teaching experience

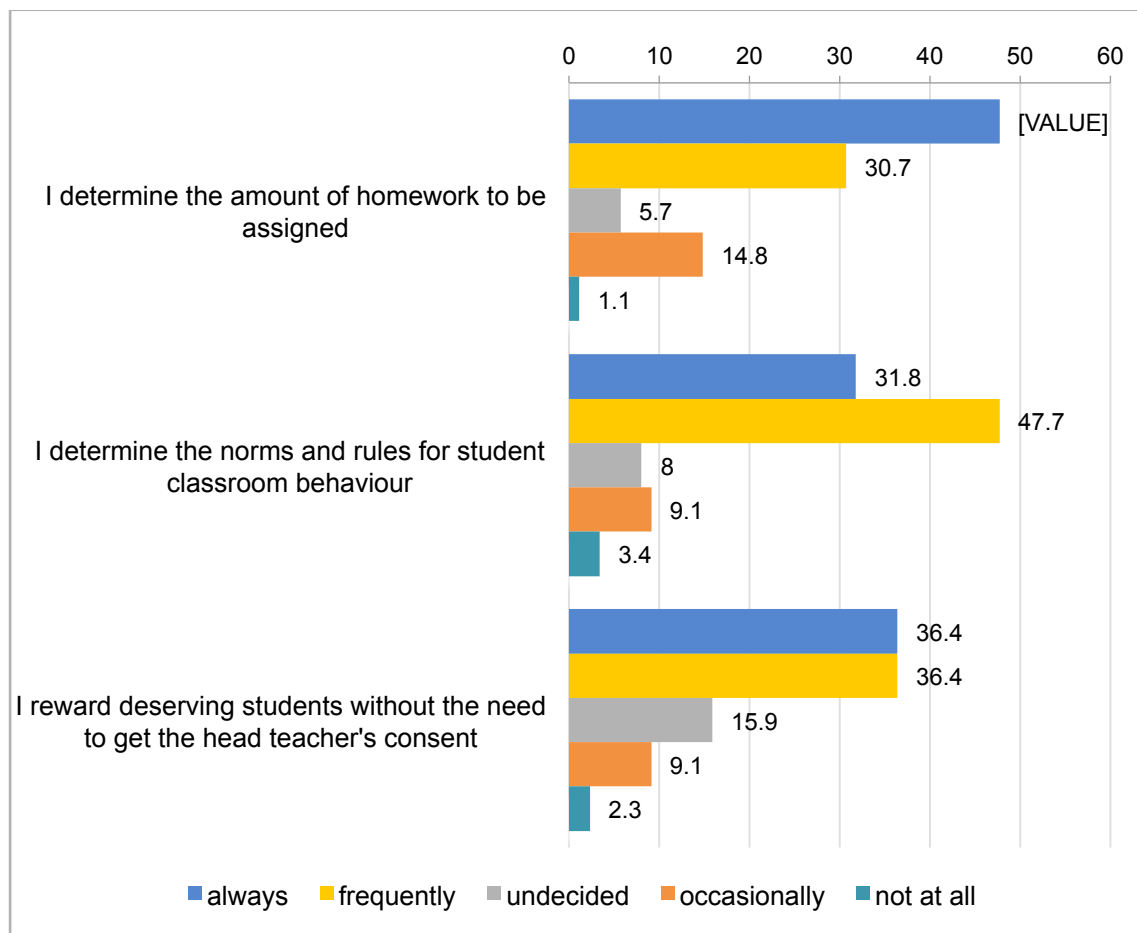
According to the results, the levels of teaching experience of respondents vary. The study focused on teachers' exercise of autonomy in their work places and I aimed to reach as many respondents as possible with between 1 and 21+ years of experience. 23.9% of the respondents (3.4% male, 20.5% female) had 0-4 years of teaching experience. 37.5 % of the survey respondents (8% male, 20.5% female) had between 5-9 years of teaching experience. 22.7 % of the respondents (3.4% male, 19.3% female) had 10-14; 6.8% (all female) had 15-19 years of teaching experience. Finally, only a very small percentage of respondents had 20-24 (1.1% male, 3.4% female) and 24 and over years of teaching experience (4.5% female).

5.2.2 Teaching and assessment

In order to explore the extent to which teachers of English exercise autonomy in relation to teaching and assessment in state lower-secondary schools, the survey included nine items and respondents were asked to express their views using a five point Likert scale, in which the responses were: 'always', 'frequently', 'undecided', 'occasionally', and 'not at all.' The items in the questionnaire included:

- (a) I am free to use my own assessment activities in my class independent from those suggested by MoNE;
- (b) I determine the amount of homework to be assigned;
- (c) I have a say over selecting textbooks together with my colleagues at school;
- (d) I determine how classroom space is used;
- (e) I determine the norms and rules for student classroom behaviour;
- (f) I am free to select the teaching methods and strategies independent from those suggested by MoNE;
- (g) I have flexibility to select topics and skills to be taught from the centralised English teaching curriculum;
- (h) I find a way and time to teach the things I like teaching in addition to those in the curriculum;
- (i) I reward deserving students without the need to get the head teacher's consent.

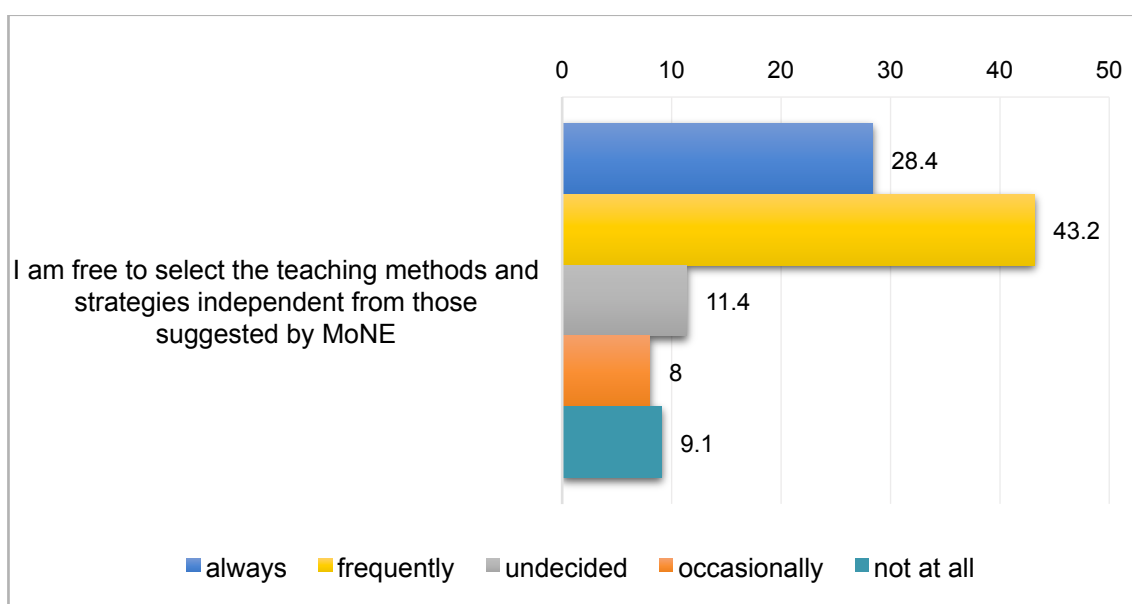
Among these items, the survey respondents reported that they always or frequently enjoyed autonomy the most when responding to the items relating to the amount of homework, student classroom behaviour, and rewarding students. Graph-1 shows the percentages of the responses.



Graph-1

As illustrated in the graph, 78.4% of the respondents always or frequently determined the amount of homework to be assigned. 79.5% said they always or frequently determined the norm and rules for student classroom behaviour and 72.8% always or frequently rewarded deserving students without the need to get the head teacher's consent.

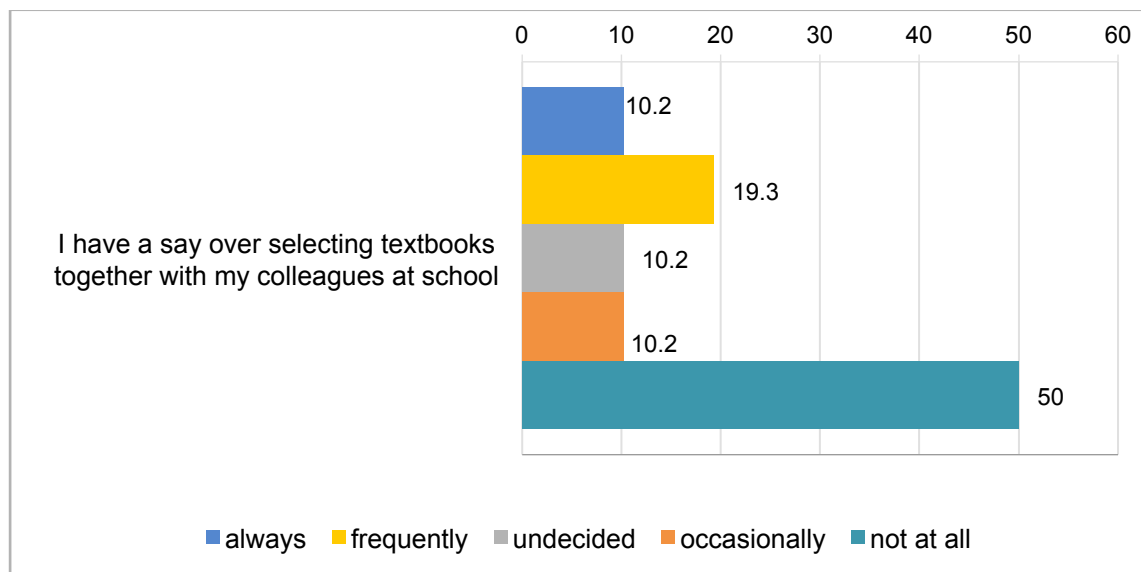
Similarly, the overall responses to the item about the freedom teachers had in selecting teaching methods and strategies were also positive (Graph-2):



Graph-2

71.6% of respondents said they were frequently or always free to select the teaching methods and strategies other than those suggested by MoNE. 17.1% stated this happened only occasionally or not at all. One survey respondent commented that having freedom over their use of methods and techniques in the classroom was very important and they had very limited freedom now. The respondent suggested that this was the consequence of lack of English use in the classroom by Turkish teachers of English: 'The more years pass in which students fail to speak in English successfully, the more autonomy and freedom will be taken out of our hands.'

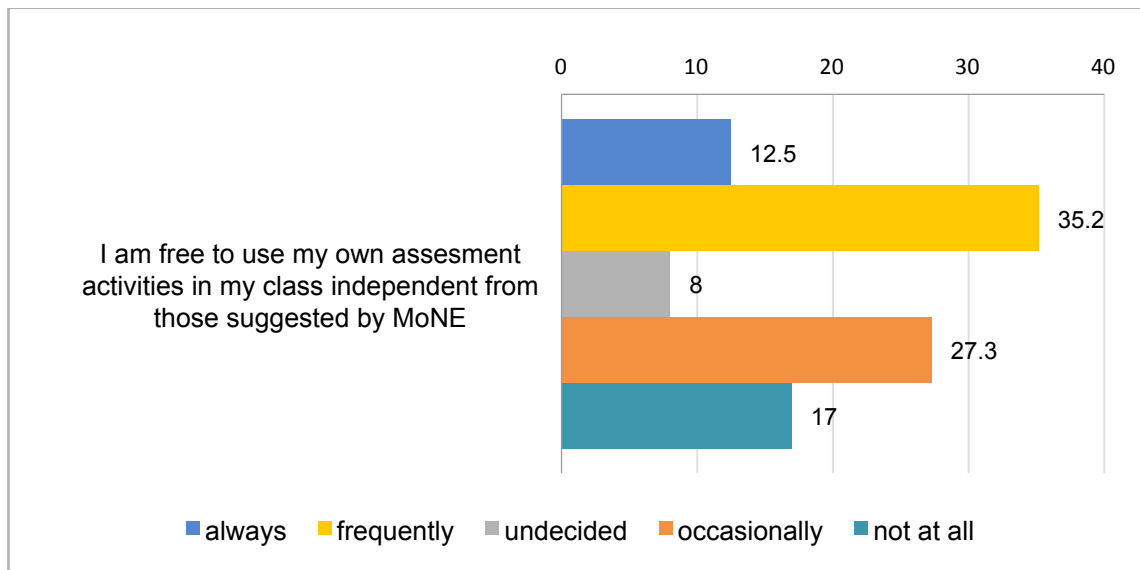
One of the items in this section of the survey had a high proportion of negative responses. Graph 3 shows the percentages of the responses.



Graph-3

Half of the respondents (50%) said that they did not have a say over selecting textbooks together with their colleagues. Indeed, one of the survey respondents complained that they could not choose the textbook they wanted to use in their classes and commented: 'The books MoNE chooses and sends are not sufficient. They are indeed not good quality at all.' What stands out in the figure is that 29.5% of respondents, however, always or frequently had a say over selecting textbooks together with their colleagues. MoNE's free textbook project was mentioned in Chapter 2 in this thesis. This findings suggest that there still can be spaces for teachers to select textbooks and the qualitative data reported in Section 5.3 will shed more light on how this might be achieved.

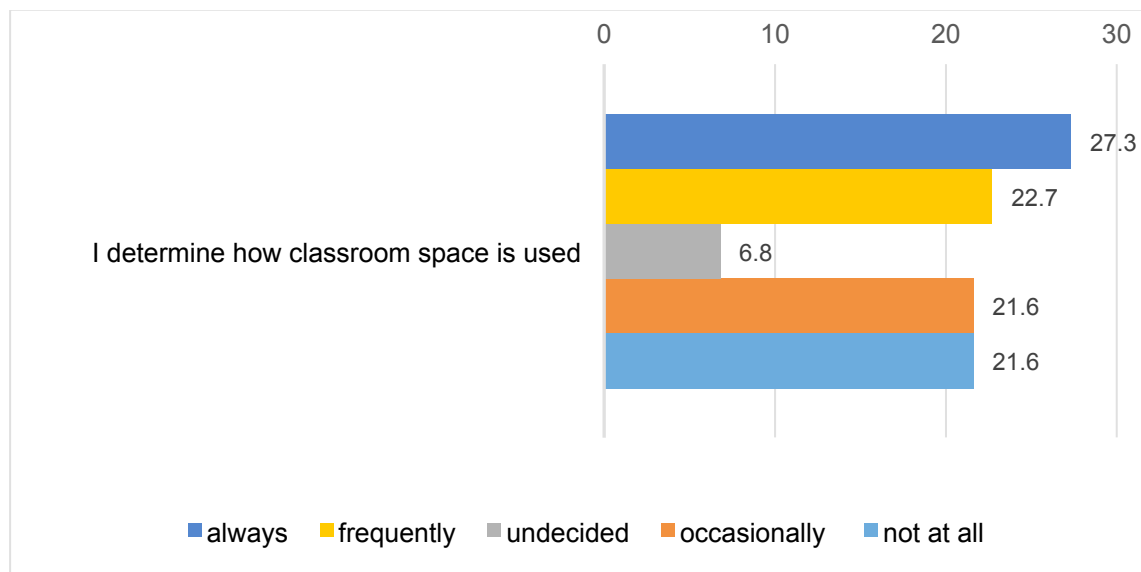
In relation to the other items in the teaching and assessment section of the survey, the responses of the survey participants varied greatly. Graph-4 illustrates the percentages of responses to the items relating to the teacher's use of their own assessment activities:



Graph-4

On one hand, 47.7% of respondents indicated that they were frequently or always free to use their own assessment techniques in their classes, independent from those suggested by MoNE. 44.3%, on the other hand, said they used their own assessment techniques in their classes only occasionally or not at all. The results, as shown in graph 4, revealed a split in opinion over the freedom teachers thought they had on using their own assessment activities.

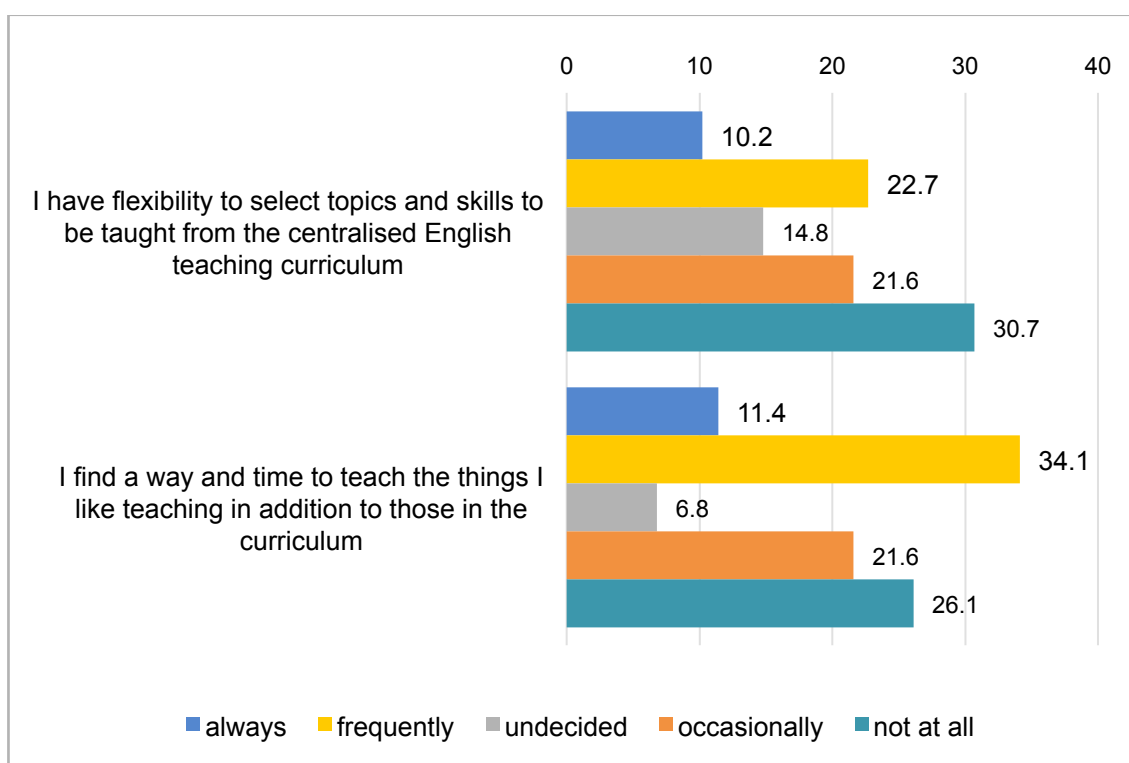
In relation to classroom space, 50% of respondents said that they always or frequently determined how this was used while 43.2% were able to do so only occasionally or not at all. The following graph illustrates the responses:



Graph-5

The divided opinion is apparent in the responses in relation to teachers' voice over how classroom space is used. These suggest that despite the presence of centralised education system, the exercise of autonomy by teachers is likely to vary from one teacher to another or from one school to another.

The survey questionnaire also asked teachers to share their views on two items related to the English language teaching curriculum. The survey graph 6 illustrates the responses obtained from the survey participants in relation to these:



Graph-6

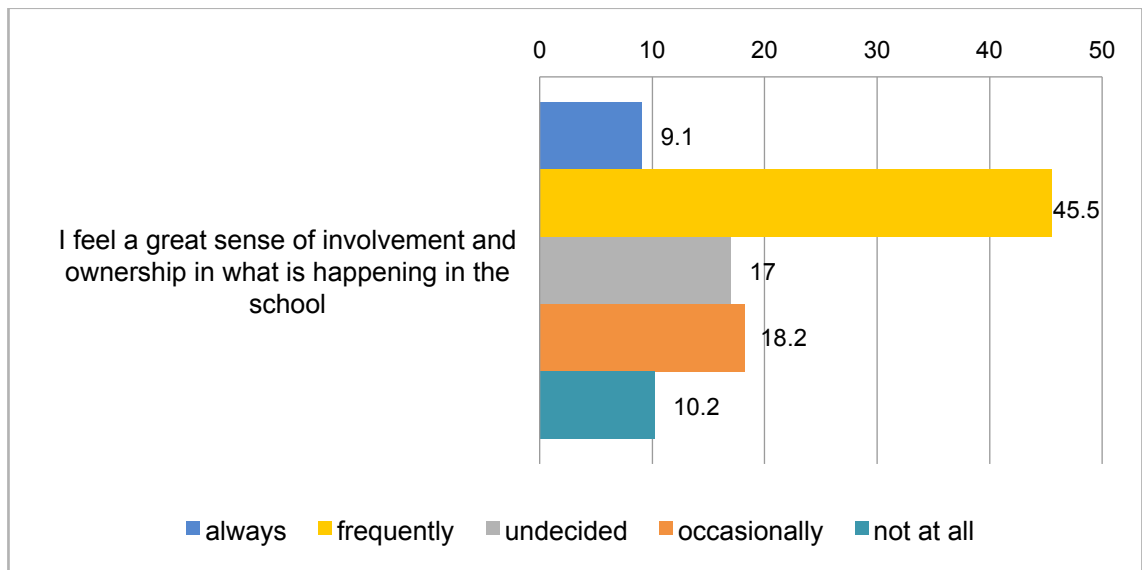
The ability to teach selectively, omitting some of the topics and skills prescribed in MoNE's centralised English teaching curriculum can be considered as one way of exercising autonomy. 52.3% of survey respondents remarked that only occasionally or never did they have the flexibility to choose topics and skills they teach. 32.9% stated that they frequently or always had the flexibility to do so. 47.7% of respondents said that only occasionally or never did they find a way and time to teach their favoured topics in addition to those in the curriculum. 45.5%, on the other hand, frequently or always found a way and time to teach things they liked in addition to those in the curriculum. As Graph-6 shows in the question of whether teachers are able to teach the topics they prefer, opinion is divided.

5.2.3 School management

The questionnaire survey included seven items in relation to school management in order to investigate teachers' exercise of autonomy in this area. These were:

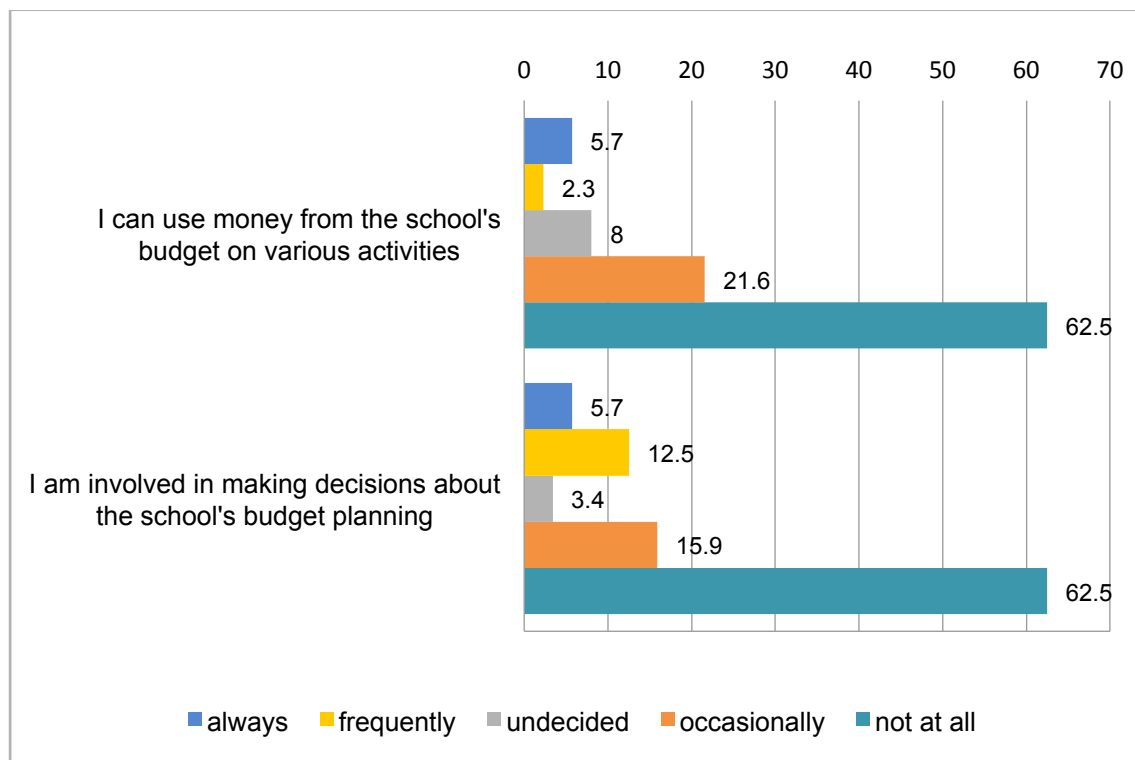
- (a) I feel a great sense of involvement and ownership in what is happening in the school;
- (b) I am involved in making decisions about the school's budget planning;
- (c) I can use money from the school's budget on various activities;
- (d) I have a say in scheduling the use of time in my classroom;
- (e) I work collaboratively with my colleagues to create working conditions that fit in with how we want to work;
- (f) My colleagues and I have a say in grouping students into classes in school;
- (g) I am comfortable with parents.

More than half of the survey respondents said that they frequently or always felt a great sense of involvement and ownership in what was happening in the school. 28.4% felt the same way only occasionally or not at all. This is illustrated in the following graph:



Graph-7

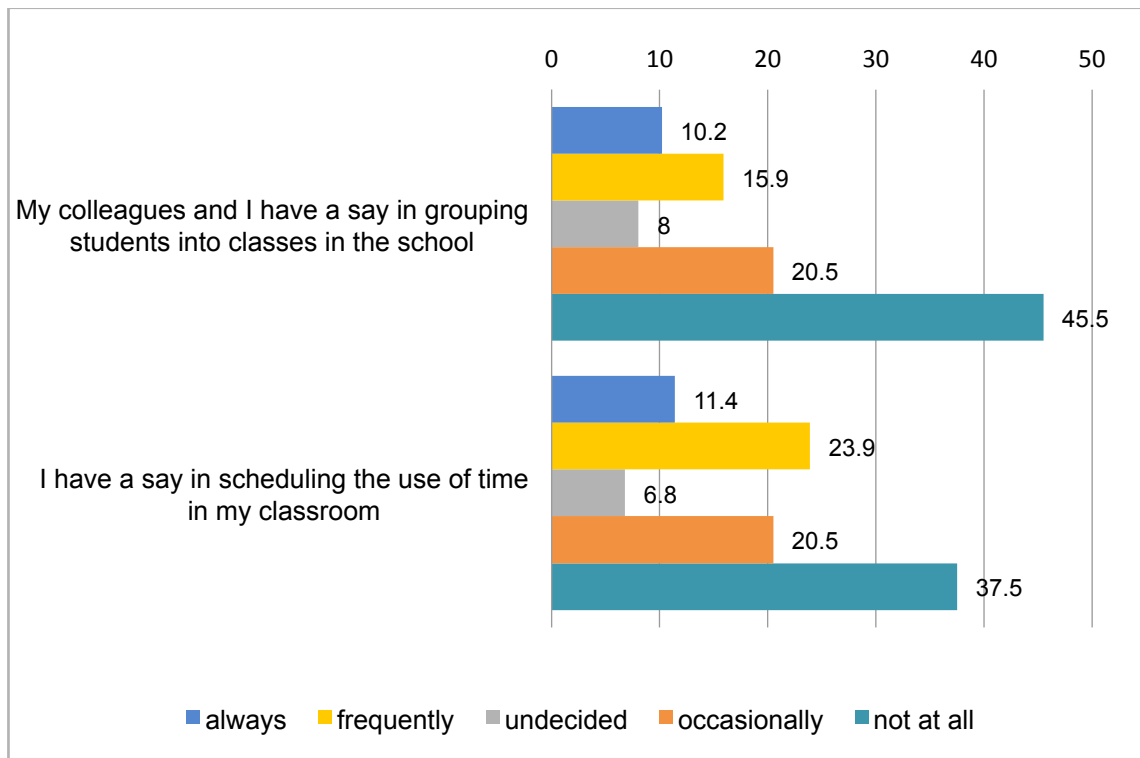
However, despite a majority feeling involvement and ownership in their school contexts, the responses given to the next four items, which are presented next, were generally negative.



Graph-8

Graph-8 illustrates that the majority of survey respondents, for instance, reported that only occasionally or never did they use money from the school’s budget on various activities, or nor were they involved in making decisions about the school’s budget planning.

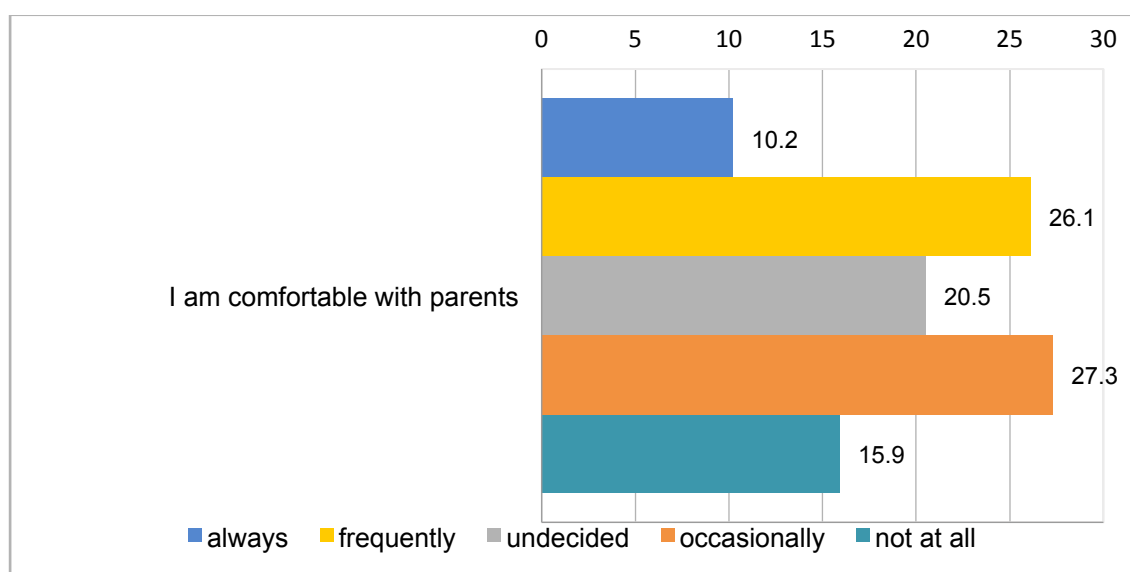
Similarly, ‘not at all’ and ‘occasionally’ were the most frequently chosen responses for the items relating to placing students in classes or teacher’s timetabling their use of time in the classroom. This is shown in the following graph:



Graph-9

66% of the respondents said that they and their colleagues had a say in grouping students into classes in the school only occasionally or not at all and 58% of respondents had a say in scheduling the use of time in their classroom only occasionally or not at all. 35.3% said they frequently or always had a say in scheduling the use of time in their classrooms. The results suggest that more often than not, teachers are not involved in the process of determining their teaching schedule or the composition of the classes they teach.

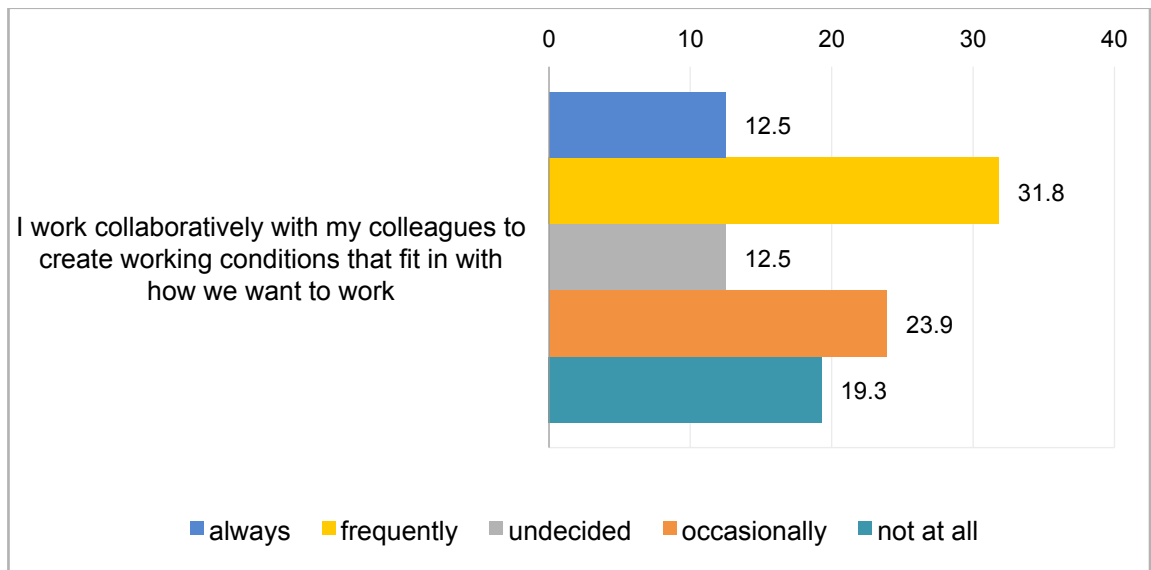
Additionally, one of the items in the school management section of the survey questionnaire aimed to explore relationships between teachers and parents:



Graph-10

Graph-10 shows a split in the responses. While nearly half of the respondents were comfortable with parents only occasionally or not at all; the other half were frequently or always at ease with them. The variation in responses can be explained by the fact that a number of factors such as characteristics of individual teachers, the school context, or characteristics and socio-economic background of parents may have an influence over the relationship teachers form with parents.

Moreover, the extent to which English teachers work collaboratively with their colleagues to create working conditions that fit in with how they want to work was also explored in the survey. Graph-11 illustrates the responses:



Graph-11

As Graph-11 shows, 44.3% of respondents said they frequently or always worked collaboratively with their colleagues to create working conditions that fit in with how they wanted to work. 43.2% did so only occasionally or not at all. There can be many reasons why one half of the participants were able to work collaboratively while the other half cannot. These were explored in the next phases of the study.

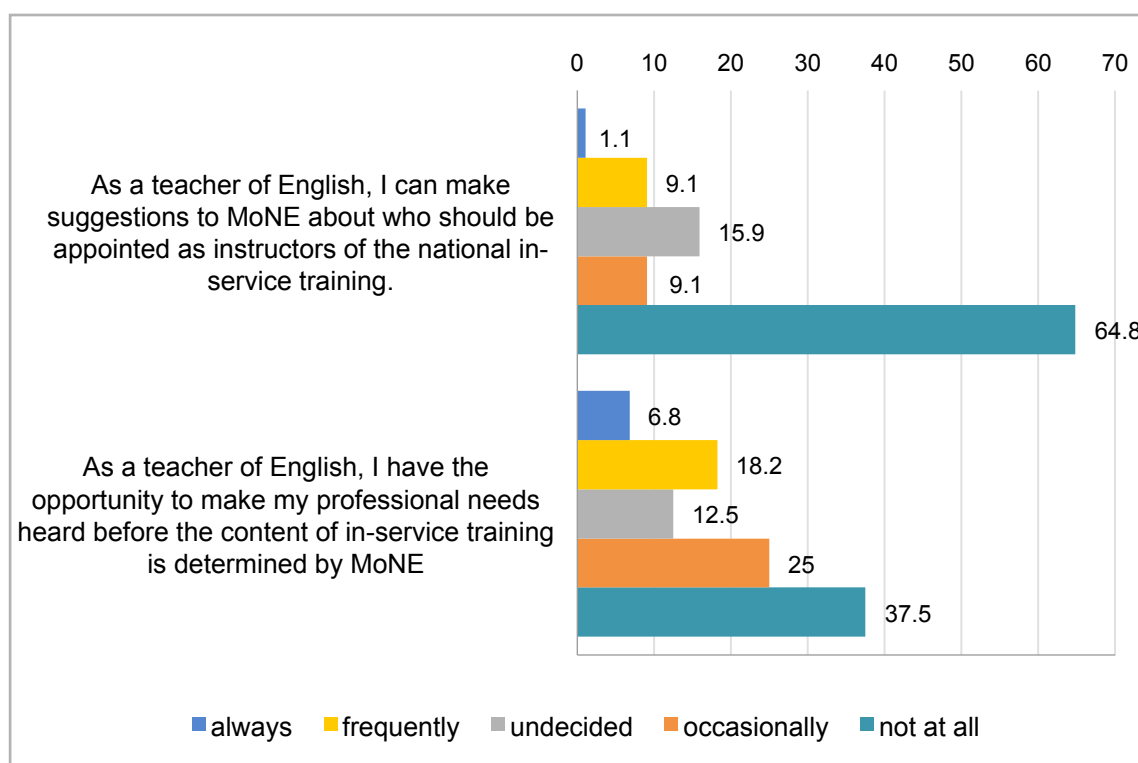
5.2.4 Professional development

The professional development section of the survey included six items, which aimed to explore teachers' exercise of autonomy in this area. These were:

- (a) I identify my development targets and prepare an individual development plan;
- (b) I engage in action research and/or exploratory practice to develop my teaching;
- (c) I help those who have less teaching experience than I have;

- (d) I take the risk of doing things differently in the classroom;
- (e) As a teacher of English I have the opportunity to make my professional needs heard before the content of in-service training is determined by MoNE;
- (f) As a teacher of English, I can make suggestions to MoNE about who should be appointed as instructors for the national in-service training.

Among these items, the majority of respondents stated that they never or only occasionally had autonomy in helping to shape the provision of in-service training at national level. Graph-12 illustrates the responses:



Graph-12

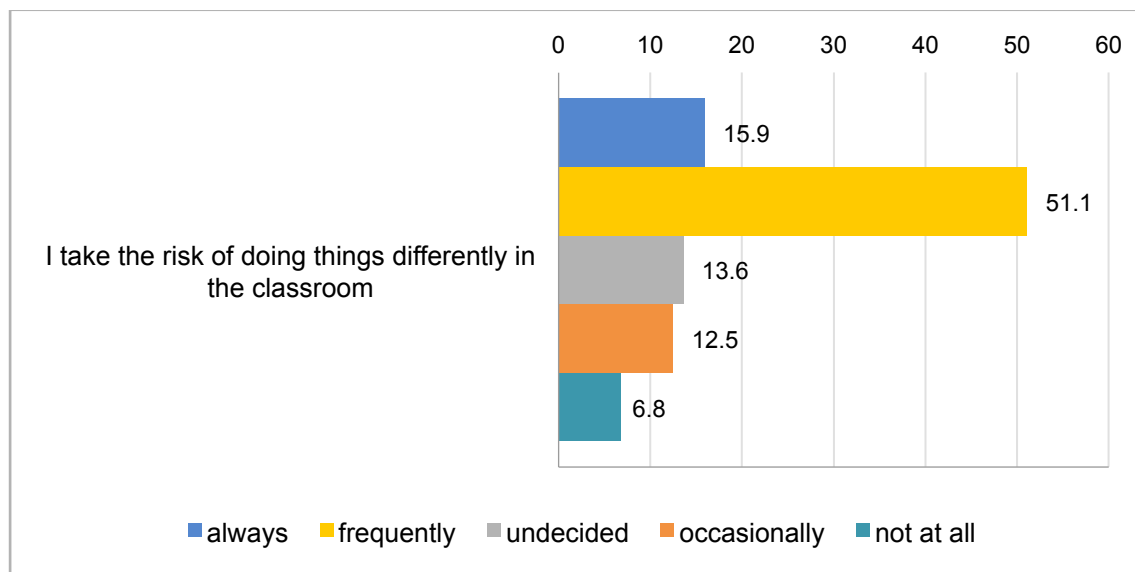
64.8% of respondents stated that they were unable to make suggestions to MoNE about who should be appointed as instructors for the national in-service training.

One of the survey respondents commented: 'School head teachers are appointed to

give training sessions for teachers. I respect their experience but what we need is fresh minds, new things.' Another respondent complained that teachers had no chance at all to give their opinions about the national in-service training seminars or their instructors. The respondent then continued: 'Even if we were given that chance, I do not think it would be taken into consideration. Locally we have got different developmental needs and the ministry would not respond to these.'

According to the results, 62.5% of respondents indicated that the content of in-service training was determined by MoNE and that their professional development needs were taken into account only occasionally or not at all. One of the survey respondents commented: 'Teacher opinions and experiences aren't cared [sic].' Another commented: 'Even if I had the chance to give my opinion, this wouldn't [sic] make any difference.' 25.3%, on the other hand, always or frequently have the opportunity to make their professional needs heard before MoNE determines the content of in-service training.

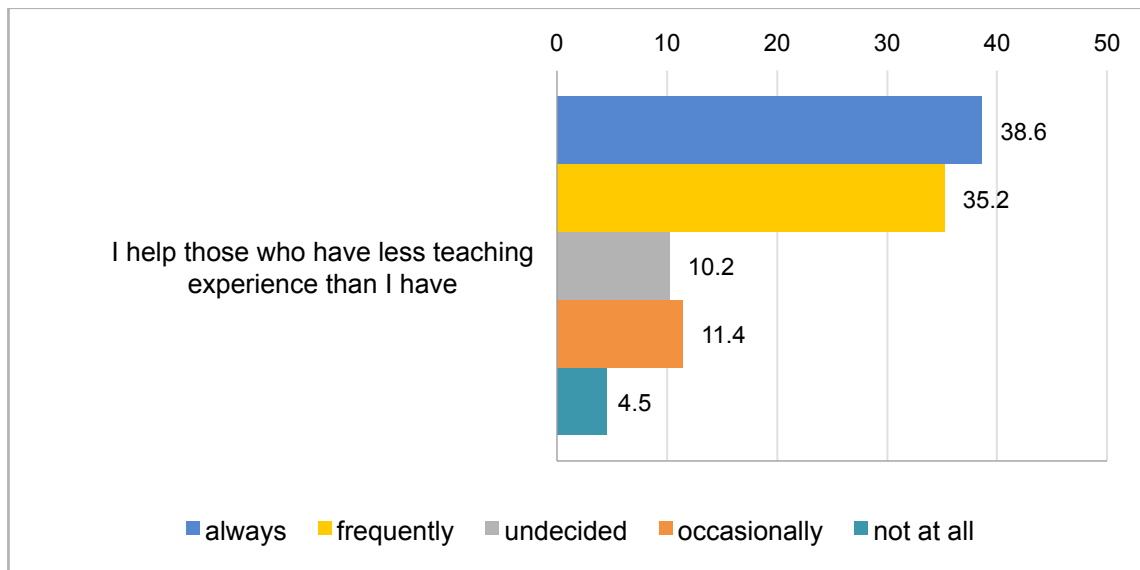
The responses to the rest of the survey items in the area of professional development were generally positive:



Graph-13

As can be seen in Graph-13, 67% of the respondents said they always or frequently took the risk of doing things differently in the classroom. Taking the risk of doing things differently suggest that these teachers use discretion in the classroom when teaching. The observation and interview data, which will be presented in Section 5.2, provides answers as to how this happens.

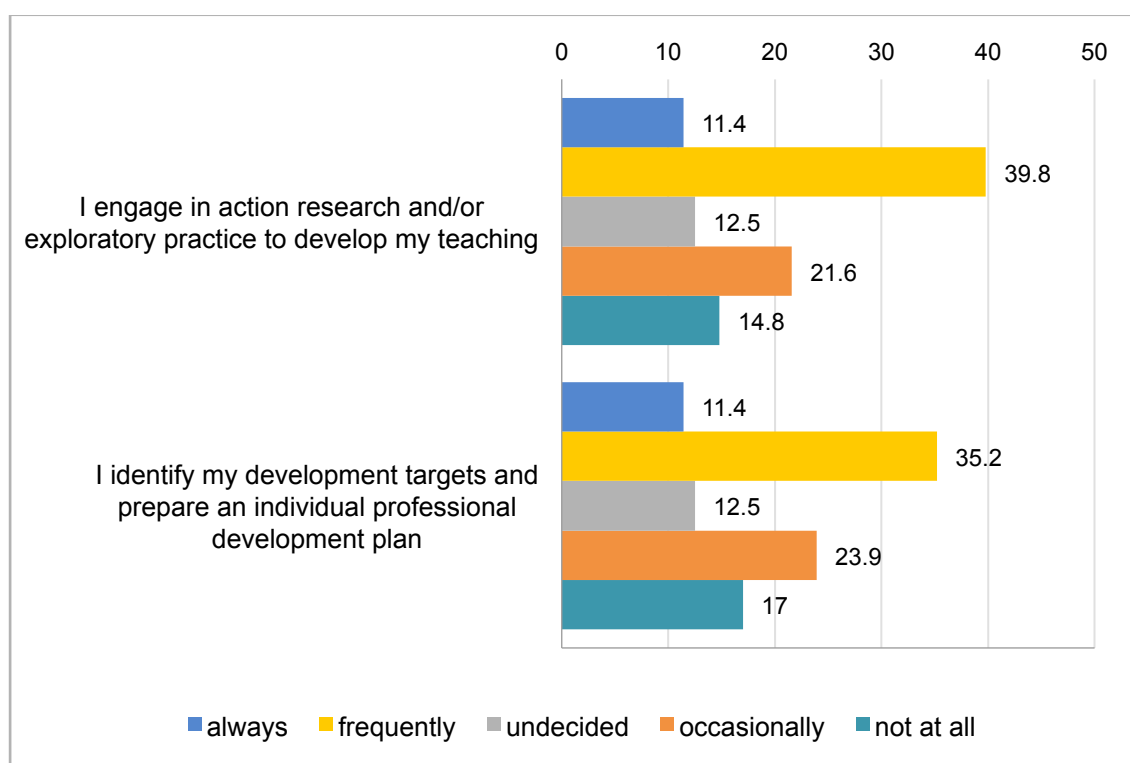
The survey questionnaire also asked teachers if they helped those who had less teaching experience in order to explore if any collaboration takes place among them. 73.8% of the respondents claimed that they always or frequently helped those who had less teaching experience than they had. This is illustrated in Graph-14:



Graph-14

25.9% stated that, as shown in Graph-14, they helped less experienced teachers never or only occasionally. Although this can be an individual preference of these teachers, it also raises some questions about the school contexts and collegial relationships they form within these contexts. As none of the respondents made any comments about this, it is unclear why some of these teachers fail to support their less experienced colleagues.

Finally, as can be seen in Graph-15, 51.2% of the respondents claimed that they always or frequently engaged in action research and/or exploratory practice to develop their teaching while 36.4% acknowledged that they never or only occasionally did so.



Graph-15

Almost half of the respondents (46.6%), on the other hand, as can be seen in Graph-15, indicated that they always or frequently identified their development targets and prepared an individual professional development plan for themselves.

In addition to the views presented in the figures so far, some of the survey respondents expressed how important it was for them to have autonomy over their own professional development or the kind of challenges they had in this process. One survey respondent talked about how he had gained respect and freedom in his working context because of running European projects:

I am an experienced successful teacher. Everyone respects me at school and my teaching of English. I think I have proven myself by undertaking European projects, using ICT [Information and Communications Technology] and web 2.0 tools in my lessons and sharing my experiences with

colleagues on EFL forums. That is why I feel I have got freedom and flexibility.

However, another survey respondent commented on the difficulties she faced when she wanted to prepare a Comenius project:

The year I was appointed to this school, the start of a new Comenius project was given. Our head teacher did not include the newly appointed teachers in this project at all. I am an experienced teacher. I organise eTwinning projects every year and am invited to workshops all the time. I wanted to use my experiences in the school's Comenius project and expressed myself very clearly to the head teacher that my intention was not to be part of the project simply to go abroad. The head teacher insisted on his initial decision and excluded us from the project. This project created hostility among English subject teachers. In every school, there are similar things happening nowadays. Projects must belong to schools, not to individuals. Instead the environment created is where a group of teachers work secretly on the project and do not share anything with the rest. As a teacher, this has caused a lot of stress for me and, for the first time, it has affected the way I see my profession and my colleagues and management. My disappointment, however, has not yet affected the relationship between me and my students and how I give my classes.

Participating in these kinds of projects, as observed by another survey respondent, is important because: 'Teachers must be encouraged to participate in European projects by school management because only then will English teachers be able to

see new horizons to teaching which will help them with their practice in our technological world.'

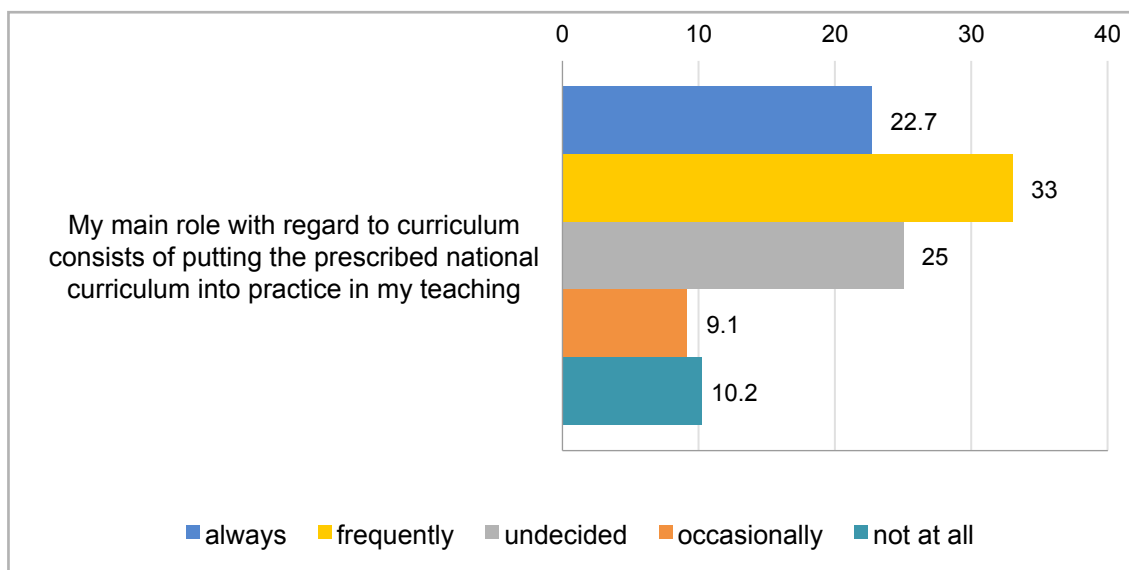
5.2.5 Curriculum development

In the curriculum development section of the survey, there were six items. Each aimed to explore the extent to which teacher autonomy was exercised in relation to curriculum development in the research context. The statements they contained were:

- (a) I have a good knowledge of national curriculum development processes;
- (b) My work permits me to make contributions to the national curriculum development and redesign processes;
- (c) I am offered the opportunity to raise issues about the national English curriculum and submit these to the National Curriculum Development Panel;
- (d) My main role with regard to curriculum consists of putting the prescribed national curriculum into practice in my teaching;
- (e) I can initiate and administer new enrichment and cultural activities;
- (f) I have flexibility in devising new learning materials for my students.

According to the results, more than half of the survey respondents (55.7%) said that their main role with regard to curriculum consisted of putting the prescribed national curriculum into practice in their teaching. 25% of the respondents said they were

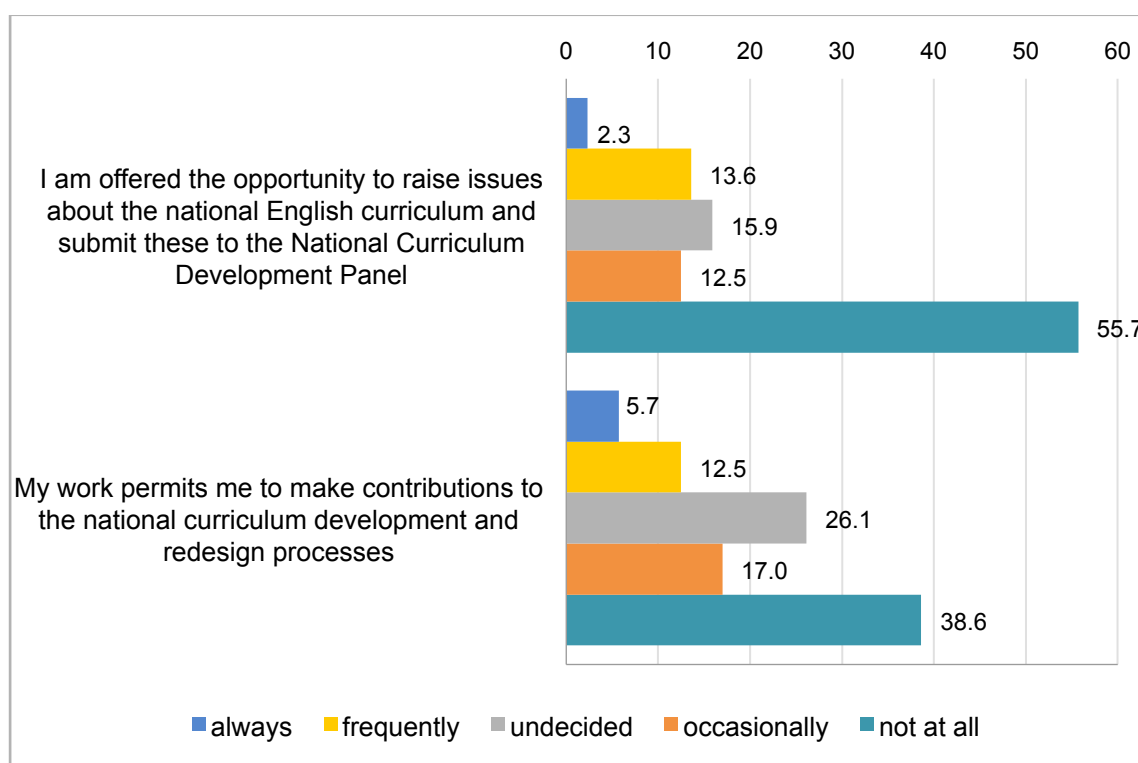
undecided. These views are illustrated in Graph-16.



Graph-16

If teachers are to exercise autonomy or create spaces for autonomy in relation to curriculum, it is necessary that they first accept wider roles with regard to the curriculum – roles wider than implementing the curriculum in the classroom. Hence, the data in Graph-16 raises some questions about teachers' mindsets pertaining to what their role as a teacher consists of.

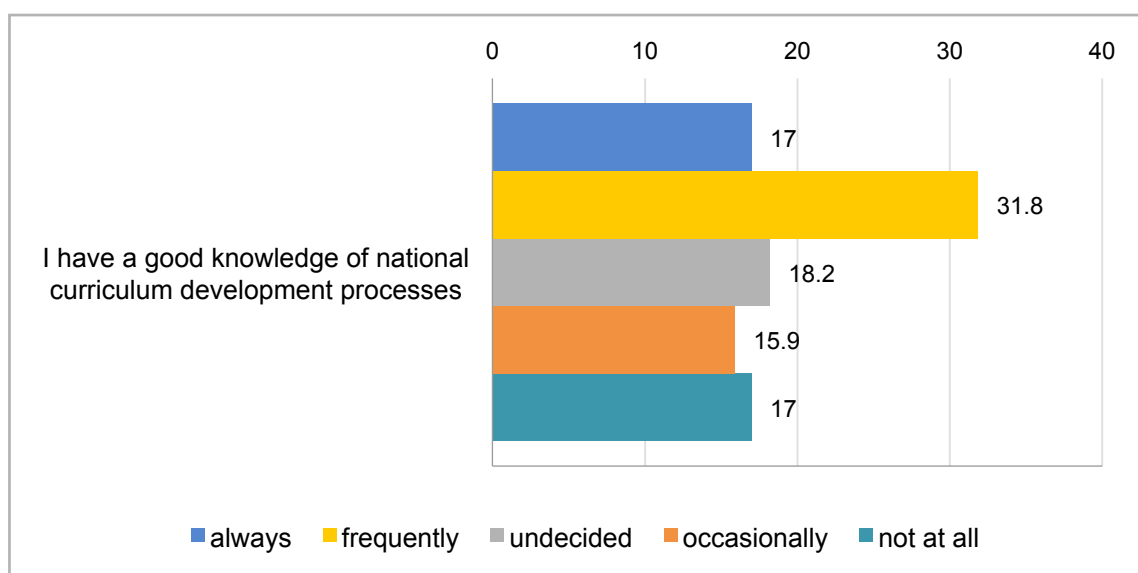
Nevertheless, the rest of the items in this part of the survey partly explained – to some extent – why the majority saw their role in relation to the curriculum as not going beyond putting it into practice in the classroom. Graph-17 illustrates this:



Graph-17

The majority of the respondents (70.2%) stated that they were never or only occasionally offered the opportunity to raise issues about the national English curriculum programme and submit these to the National Curriculum Development panel. Furthermore, 55.6% of respondents thought their work did not permit them to contribute to the national curriculum development and redesign processes or did so only occasionally. 26.1% were undecided. As well as teachers' own dispositions related to their role as teachers, these findings shown in Graph-17 suggest that spaces available to many of these teachers to take part in curriculum development are scarce. Yet, a small percentage states that frequently or always they were able to communicate to MoNE about the issues related to the curriculum (25.9%) and contribute to the development and redesign of the curriculum (18.2%). The analysis of documents and interview study, which will be presented in Section 5.2, offers some insights as to how these might be achieved by teachers.

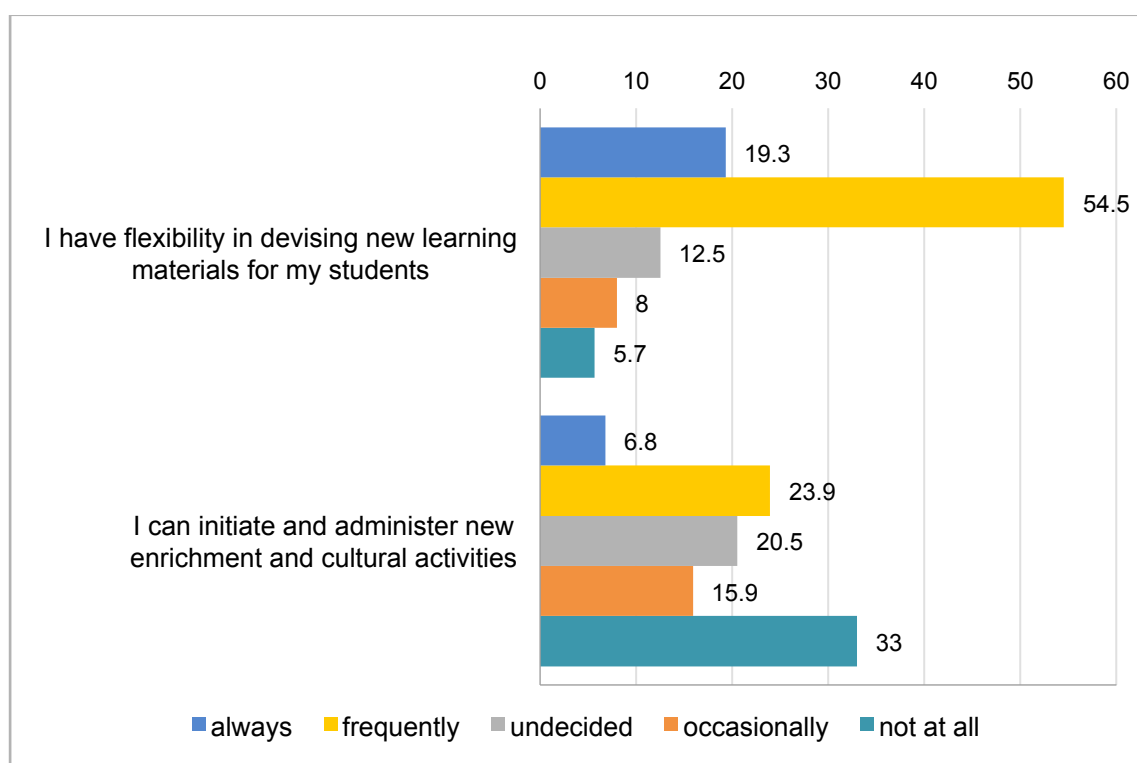
The survey questionnaire also asked respondents the extent to which they thought they had a good knowledge of national curriculum developments (Graph-18).



Graph-18

For a teacher to exercise autonomy in relation to curriculum development, it is necessary that s/he has a good understanding of what this process involves. As can be seen in Graph-18, 55.5% said they frequently or always felt they had good knowledge of the curriculum development processes and 32.9% said they never or occasionally did. 18.2% were unsure.

Finally, according to the survey results, while a majority said they always or frequently had flexibility in devising new learning materials for their students, almost half of the respondents (48.9%) stated they initiate and administer new enrichment and cultural activities only occasionally or not at all. Graph-19 illustrates the responses:



Graph-19

It is apparent in the graph that most of the respondents enjoy autonomy in relation to the materials they use in their classroom, where they can be considered as the main holders of responsibility and authority. However, the opinion divides again about the initiation and administration of enrichment and cultural activities, which involves other figures such as school head teachers or parents. These will be further touched on in the following section (Section 5.3) where I present the findings obtained from documents, observation and interview study.

5.2.6 A summary of survey findings

The following table summarises the findings of the survey questionnaire:

	Generally positive	Generally negative	Divided opinion
Teaching assessment	<p>Determining the norms and rules for student classroom behaviour</p> <p>Determining the amount of homework</p> <p>Rewarding students</p> <p>Selecting the teaching methods and strategies independent from those suggested by MoNE</p>	<p>Having a say over textbooks together with colleagues at school</p>	<p>Being free to use their own assessment activities in the classes independent from those suggested by MoNE</p> <p>Determining how classroom space is used</p> <p>Having flexibility to select topics and skills to be taught from the curriculum</p>
School management	<p>Feeling great sense of involvement and ownership in what is happening in the school</p>	<p>Using money from the school budget</p> <p>Involved in making decisions about the school's budget planning</p> <p>Having a say in grouping students into classes</p> <p>Having a say in timetabling</p>	<p>Feeling comfortable with parents</p> <p>Working collaboratively with other colleagues to create working conditions that fit in with how they want to work</p>

Professional development	Taking the risk of doing things differently	Making suggestions to MoNE about the appointment of instructors of the national in-service training	
	Helping those with less teaching experience		
	Engaging in action research	Having the opportunity to make their professional needs heard by MoNE	
	Identifying their development targets and preparing an individual plan		
Curriculum development	Agreeing that their role with regard to curriculum is to put it into practice	Having the opportunity to raise issues about the curriculum and submit these	Initiating and administering new enrichment and cultural activities
	Having a good knowledge of national curriculum development processes	Making contributions to the curriculum development and design processes	
	Having flexibility to devise new learning materials		

5.3 Observation, documents and interview study findings

5.3.1 Information about observation participants and their school contexts

The observations in schools had a total duration of 17 hours 40 minutes. Three English teachers were observed in three different state lower secondary schools in a central Anatolian province. These teachers were interviewed after the observations. The following table shows the participants' gender, ages, years of teaching experience and weekly teaching hours. Each participant is assigned a pseudonym.

Names	Gender	Age	Years of teaching experience	Weekly teaching hours
Mehmet	Male	44	23 years	30
Özlem	Female	30	8 years	30
Sema	Female	45	20 years	27

Table 5 Observation study participants

All three schools were state-run lower secondary schools and resembled each other in many ways including the layout of the classrooms, or decoration of corridors. The desks in the classrooms were in straight rows facing the front of the classroom. Almost all the classrooms I visited had electronic whiteboards. Conventional classroom whiteboards were placed next to the electronic whiteboards. Each

classroom had a portrait of Atatürk, a copy of his Address to Turkish Youth and the Turkish flag.



Figure 9 A shot from a Turkish classroom

Each teacher staffroom had a number of noticeboards where forthcoming events, directives from MoNE, information about school committees or the posters of specific teacher unions were displayed. Each school had students from mixed

social backgrounds. In the rest of this section, brief information will be provided about the schools. The information was obtained from the schools' online profiles¹⁵.

The school Mehmet works in aims to develop a democratic and modern education environment for its students in accordance with the principles of science, affection and tolerance, which also constitute the key principles of the school. Within this framework, the school stresses that the students gain the skills of individual learning and teamwork while they are encouraged to improve their abilities. It has 29 classrooms, 806 students and 39 teachers.

The school Sema works in highlights the importance of school-family collaboration and ensures that every individual student at school is special and receives individual attention from members of staff. The school also invites teachers and students to understand the significance of contributing to each other's development and learning journey. In accordance with the principles of National Education, it aims to educate students who will become successful and confident members of society. This school has 92 classrooms, 1389 students and 27 teachers. Among these, nine are teachers of English.

The school Özlem works in provides religious education including teaching the Qur'an, Arabic and the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad. The school emphasises the importance of educating children who find peace and happiness in faith and are capable and confident of solving the problems of today. According to the words of

¹⁵ The information about all the schools in the Turkey can be found on the following link of MoNE: <http://www.meb.gov.tr/baglantilar/okullar/> This allows us to search for specific schools in the country by name and province.

the school's management unit as published online, its mission is to provide an educational environment that can bring the potential within the individual to life. The school has 32 classrooms and 24 teachers, and it accommodates 305 students¹⁶.

5.3.2 Interview participants

The number of interviewees participating in this study is 14. Of these, five are English teachers, three are head teachers and six are educational administrators. Three of these teachers (Mehmet, Sema, and Özlem) were observed prior to interviews. The following table presents professional roles, gender, years of teaching and working experience of the interviewees. They are identified by pseudonyms.

	Interviewees	Gender	Years of Experience
English teachers	Mehmet	Male	23 years
	Derya	Female	28 years
	Sema	Female	20 years
	Gizem	Female	11 years
	Özlem	Female	8 years
Head teachers	Ali	Male	30 years
	Serkan	Male	18 years
	Hüseyin	Male	34 years
Educational	Hakan	Male	22 years

¹⁶ The observation study was undertaken shortly after the implementation of 4+4+4 law, thus the transformation of schools was still in progress. This is reflected in the teacher/student ratios of the schools in which I undertook the observation study. The teacher/student ratio for the first school is 20.6:1; for the second school is 51.4:1; and for the third school is 12:1.

administrators	Ünal	Male	15 years
	Deniz	Male	13 years
	Ahmet	Male	25 years
	Emre	Male	28 years
	Ediz	Male	19 years

Table 6 Interview study participants

The first teacher I interviewed is Mehmet. He is an English teacher with 23 years of teaching experience in primary and lower secondary schools. The second interviewee is Derya. She has been teaching English in Turkey for 28 years. Sema is the third teacher interviewee and has 20 years of teaching experience. She began learning English with the hope of gaining employment in a factory when she was young. She was encouraged by her private tutor to enter for university exams and become an English teacher. Gizem, the fourth teacher interviewee, has 11 years of English teaching experience and no longer enjoys her job in her new school. Özlem is the last teacher I interviewed. She is a young English teacher with 8 years of teaching experience. She currently works in two different lower secondary schools.

The first head teacher I interviewed is Ali with three decades of experience. He was trained to be a religious culture teacher. Serkan is the second head teacher I interviewed. He has four years of teaching experience in a rural town. Serkan is the head teacher of the school where Sema works. His subject is chemistry. He has been working as a head teacher for the last 14 years, but he still misses the days he was teaching. Hüseyin is a head teacher with 34 years of experience and was my last head teacher interviewee. He jokes that he no longer remembers what he was trained to teach.

The first educational administrator I interviewed is Hakan. He has a background in geography teaching. He currently works in a provincial directorate of MoNE and his role covers disciplining the staff, and making sure individuals work efficiently. If there is a problem, Hakan investigates the causes and monitors the individual's work motivation, providing opportunities for increasing motivation. Ünal, the second interviewee, currently works in one of the provincial directorates of MoNE. He has an English teaching background. Deniz, Ahmet, Emre and Ediz were interviewed after the data analysis of the first interviews was completed. The last four worked within the same district directorate at the time of the interviewing.

5.3.3 The participants' understandings of teacher autonomy

I began my interviews by asking the participants what it meant to be a good English teacher. Definitions varied, some highlighting the importance of pedagogical knowledge, others stressing the role of teachers in the wider community. Mehmet, an English teacher, for instance, stressed the importance of having a good command of English, good pedagogical knowledge and being a role model to students. He also commented that a good English teacher must have strong communication skills and be aware of both developmental and psychological differences within the age groups s/he was teaching:

We, as teachers, are not dealing with mechanical creatures; we deal with students who are real ... students' psychological or emotional conditions on the day of teaching guides me in respect of which part of the curriculum I need to focus on, or which parts to skip. For example, if one of the students in the classroom argued with another one; or lost his/her favourite pencil; or

something really serious happened in the classroom, something that is really serious from their perspective. I cannot leave their problems unsolved. Or rather, I can, but then they will not perform very well in the lesson (Source code: Mq1) (See Appendix 12 for the original quotes in Turkish).

In a similar vein to Mehmet, Derya described a good teacher as a teacher of students not of subjects. Her words explain what she meant:

A child is crying here, for example, or they really got into trouble in the previous lesson, am I supposed to ignore this and continue my lesson? I simply cannot. Instead what I tell them is to put their textbooks in their bags and tell me whatever the problem is so that I can help them solve it (Source code: Dq1a).

Gizem worked in a semi-rural area at the time of the interview. She believed learning English was not the priority of her students because, she said, most of the girls in her school left school to get married at a young age:

Besides being an English teacher, my struggle is to tell the kids more about life. Where they live is full of heavy-minded people, with lots of pressure from parents. They need someone to make life different for them. English is not their priority. They need to see life from a different perspective; they need to learn to recognise and appreciate differences... For me being a teacher means being a light for someone (Source code: Gq1).

It is obvious from Gizem's words that she willingly accepts roles as a teacher that are wider than simply doing her teaching in the classroom. The following tells us more about her:

My goal has never been to teach English to a child. I mean it wasn't my priority. The journey started with the aim of teaching English, and of course I had great times when I felt considerably satisfied for renewing the way a child sees the world or his/her view of the world and contributing to his/her life with the differences I brought (Source code: Gq2).

Özlem thinks a good English teacher is one who encourages his/her students and boosts student participation in activities by using audio and visual materials. Sema was the only person who talked about professional development when giving her own account: 'A good English teacher has to continue developing herself/himself professionally and should not continue with out-dated insufficient knowledge' (Source code: Sq10).

During interviews, whenever necessary, teachers were asked to expand on their use of the term 'teacher autonomy'. For Gizem, autonomy meant freedom, being free from constraint, using her full capacity for the benefit of the school and her students. Derya said that she was autonomous as long as she did not go beyond the boundaries and added: 'There are 30 teachers working in this school. I do not know how it would work if we all claimed autonomy and acted individually. What sort of chaos would there be? We are not brought up this way, we are not brought up autonomously' (Source Code: Dq16). For Mehmet, autonomy was being able to make decisions in relation to the curriculum, the content of the curriculum or the choice of teaching materials. Özlem saw autonomy as the right to speak out and the capability and right to make decisions. For Sema, finally, it meant self-efficacy.

The head teachers and educational administrators who participated in the interviews were also asked to define what being a good English teacher meant to them and to

comment on how they understood the concept of teacher autonomy. The most widely mentioned characteristics of good English teachers were having sophisticated pedagogical knowledge, engaging in professional development and teaching without simply adhering to plans and programmes.

The head teachers and educational administrators defined teacher autonomy using a number of terms, such as freedom, control, independence, and negotiation. For Hüseyin, for instance, teacher autonomy meant using discretion and expertise. He repeated several times that he was in favour of teachers using their discretion and expertise in their classrooms. He also believed that teachers should not be constrained in any way but he later added that the reality of the Turkish educational system made this very difficult to achieve. Serkan saw autonomy as teachers' exercise of control within the classroom, the extent to which teachers were able to contribute to planning the lesson timetable or how much they could go beyond the curriculum programme. He claimed that teachers already largely exercised autonomy within their classrooms and no one could restrict what they did or taught there. Ali defined teacher autonomy as the involvement of teachers in decisions. He stressed how beneficial it could be to negotiate with teachers about their work at school. He then referred to the religion of Islam by saying: 'Consultation in particular is very important in our religion. It is just like extracting honey from the comb. For me, teachers are like honeycombs and consulting them brings the best out of them. Ideas extracted from teachers need to be realistic enough to implement, though' (Source code: ALq5). He then said, 'two heads are better than one or if you know a thousand, still ask someone who knows only one. These are our Turkish proverbs. Completely ignoring teachers' views or restricting them from sharing their ideas is not acceptable' (Source code: ALq6).

Among the first educational administrators I interviewed, Hakan, equated autonomy with freedom, claiming that teachers would become successful when they were free. He added that teachers must be allowed to use supplementary sources. He later repeated his previous words and said:

Autonomy means professional freedom. In the past, I heard from my own teachers that classrooms are the autonomous realms of teachers that even the president cannot interfere with. Our teachers shared with us that the President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk knocked on the door before stepping into a classroom. Teachers are free in the classrooms, but, of course, a teacher cannot breach the rules (Source code: Hq1).

Referring to the role of the head teacher, Hakan elaborated more on his views on the degree of freedom teachers possess and said that teacher autonomy is limited by the need for the head teacher to monitor or control the teachers:

Teachers are free when it comes to how they give their classes, mark exam papers, or how they interact with staff members or students, but they need to be inspected by the head teacher throughout the day. The head teacher observes teachers' timekeeping at the beginning and the end of the lessons. He also makes sure that teachers keep their students quiet. A teacher can exercise autonomy but this should not hinder the lessons of others (Source code: Hq2).

Ünal, an educational administrator, defined teacher autonomy as independence but he stated that he did not support complete independence. He, then, continued by saying that the pros and cons of teachers' complete independence should be properly evaluated and teachers should be independent but inspected, which meant

being independent to a certain extent:

Teachers are the ones facing problems in their classrooms. They know their students' problems the best. It is inevitable that teachers make some decisions. If we make teachers completely dependent on the curriculum and make them entirely stick to orders and rules, student progress will be interrupted. When we ban our teachers from using test books or restrict their access to other sources, we restrict our students' process of learning, too. Educational environments are negatively influenced by these prohibitions and restrictions imprison teachers in a specific frame. Teachers can be given a little more controlled independence (Source code: Uq1).

For Deniz, teacher autonomy meant teachers' use of discretion and he commented that head teachers and school committees provided the conditions for exercising autonomy. Ahmet defined teacher autonomy as free work environments but they must operate within the limits of the education system, and national and cultural values of the Turkish nation. Emre was critical about the amount of space teachers possessed for exercising teacher autonomy and criticised MoNE, the organisation he is working for, for adopting a top down management style and excluding teachers from the design of curriculum programmes. However, Emre argued that autonomy had to be within the boundaries of the education system. For Ediz, finally, teacher autonomy meant taking risks to improve student learning and being able to go beyond the curriculum and he acknowledged that the education system constrained the exercise of this kind of autonomy.

5.3.4 Main themes deriving from observation, document analysis and interview

In line with critical realist theory, the data analysis was based on the understanding that agency and structure cannot be understood in isolation. Although each has its own powers and properties, a close interplay exists between agency and structure. Each has different properties and powers, but one is completely necessary for how the other will be shaped. Hence, in analysing the data, the focus was on identifying the most common structures that influence teachers' agency; how these structures act on agency and; how/whether teachers as active agents respond to these structures and create spaces for autonomy. Four main structures that contribute to or constrain teachers' agency were identified in the data. These are:

- a) Teaching materials and methods: textbooks, supplementary materials, use of technology, and teaching methods;
- b) Assessment: in-class assessment and TEOG;
- c) School structure: School committees, involvement in decisions relating to timetabling, teacher collaboration;
- d) Overall structure of MoNE: professional development and motivation; teacher involvement in curriculum development/evaluation, and dialogue between MoNE and teachers.

5.3.4.1 Teaching materials and methods

Four themes emerged from the data in relation to teaching materials and methods. These were: textbooks, supplementary materials, the use of technology, and teaching methods.

Textbooks

Having a say over the choice of textbooks can be considered to be an important aspect of professional activity in which teachers can exercise autonomy. This choice can give teachers more control over how they teach their lessons and how they plan their classes. Since 2003, MoNE is responsible for the preparation, selection and delivery of textbooks across Turkey¹⁷. The MoNE regulation for textbooks and educational materials published in 2009 and updated in 2015 in the Official Bulletin no. 29502 defines the role of MoNE in detail. According to the regulation, MoNE is responsible for determining the quality of all the textbooks, student workbooks and teacher guidebooks to be used in formal and informal institutions affiliated with MoNE. It is also responsible for other educational materials to be prepared, or purchased by the Ministry or obtained through donations in accordance with the general objectives and basic principles of the education system. Furthermore, MoNE is at the helm of preparing, or getting prepared, evaluating, approving, determining the eligibility period of, publishing, examining and paying the fees for the examiners, and distributing and determining the criteria publishing companies must meet in order to become suppliers of these books and materials.

A number of publishing companies prepare textbooks and get them approved by MoNE. MoNE publishes the list of books approved in the *Journal of Notifications* and purchases them for each school subject. In the list published in 2015 (MoNE, 2015a) in the *Journal of Notification* Vol 78 no. 2688, for year 5s, for example, there are five different English textbooks prepared by five different publishing companies

¹⁷ This government initiative is called the Free Textbooks Project

and authors. Only one of these books is published. Using MoNE's online textbook selection module, the school chooses the number of textbooks required. The other books are available for download from MoNE's website.

Hakan, an educational administrator, argued that control over the use of textbooks is mandatory because:

Otherwise expressions libellous to religion, to traditions, or to our country could pass beneath the government's radar. Therefore, we cannot let anyone use any textbook they want. All the textbooks have to be audited by putting them under the governmental microscope. All the books have to comply with our constitutional law (Source code: Hq9).

Deniz, an educational administrator, commented that English teachers may not have great control over their choice of textbooks but the textbooks sent to them were selected by their own colleagues. Here Deniz refers to the textbook selection panels about which Hakan had also provided further information:

Teachers who want to take part have to have at least five years teaching experience¹⁸. The application can be made online to the Board of Education. If the application is successful, teachers are invited to work on the day of reviewing which lasts for about 12 to 13 hours. We make sure that teachers do not know which books they are going to review until they arrive in the

¹⁸ According to the legislation on textbooks and educational materials published in 2012, 5 years teaching experience is required from those who have done their PhDs; and 10 years of teaching experience from those without PhD.

building. At the end of the day, they produce a report. Depending on their views, the books pass or fail (Source code: Hq10).

Hakan continued to give information about textbook selection panels and said, 'teachers participating in this process are called panellists. The commission comprises eight people. For reviewing English textbooks for instance, four English teachers are required to contribute' (Source code: Hq11).

Centralised control over textbooks appears to limit teachers' exercise of agency. However, the data suggested that some of the teachers in my survey and interview sample found a way of responding to this limitation. According to the survey data presented in the previous section, for instance, some of the teachers of English in my sample selected textbooks in cooperation with their colleagues. The data from the documents suggests (e.g. free textbooks project, government regulations) that these teachers might be doing so only among the books approved and published online by MoNE. However, none of the English teachers in my interview sample looked at the textbooks published online and they insisted – and were displeased – that they did not have any choice in selecting textbooks. Özlem, for instance, commented, 'we cannot choose our own textbooks. MoNE sends them to us and most of them are not appropriate at all. They are well above the students' level with a focus mainly on grammar and vocabulary acquisition' (Source code: Oq8).

Nevertheless, Sema's words on the day when I observed her show that in cooperation with their colleagues and the head teacher, teachers can create spaces for action and change the existing structures to some extent in order to improve the situation in line with their students' needs and levels of English:

The textbooks are above the level of our students. We discussed this with the head teacher. Luckily it was just before a meeting he attended with MoNE officials in the province where he had the chance to pass our concerns to them. He came back to the school with a simplified material given by MoNE. I used it in my classes, but later I found out that in the exam there were questions that the material I used did not contain, but the main textbooks had it (Source code: Sq1).

Sema's words suggest that this is not problem-free, though. The other teachers in my interview sample felt that the centralised control over textbooks left them completely voiceless. This appeared to be the case particularly for those teaching in Year 8. The teachers in my interview sample indicated that whether they liked the textbooks or not, they preferred using the textbooks for two reasons: if they wanted success in the centralised exam and to avoid any conflict with school inspectors. They argued that, as Sema also indicated previously, questions in the centralised exam were based on the content and vocabulary in the textbooks. Therefore, these teachers felt obliged to teach the textbook page by page so that their students did better in the exam. Furthermore, the interview with Özlem indicated that teachers' use of textbooks was monitored: 'Inspectors visiting our school make sure that the textbooks are being used. They randomly look at students' textbooks on their desks. If the books look brand new with no writing on them, then we get into trouble and are issued warnings' (Source code: Oq9).

Supplementary materials

The kinds of supplementary books teachers of English recommend to their students or use in the classroom can help them play a more active role in shaping their students' learning of English. However, the analysis of documents demonstrated a tension in Turkey in relation to teachers' use of supplementary materials. A notice sent to provincial governors in 2015 numbered 1761900-200-E.10452928 reminded them, for instance, that despite previous warnings, supplementary books and materials were being used in schools which imposed extra costs on parents. In the notice, provincial governors were asked to take all necessary precautions to prevent this.

Some of the teachers I interviewed mentioned the restrictions on their use of supplementary materials in their classrooms and indicated that they could do almost nothing about this. Özlem, for instance, commented:

We are strictly not allowed to recommend or let students use any supplementary books. I signed a paper at the beginning of this term not to recommend or use any book other than textbooks supplied by MoNE. The centralised exam is composed of multiple-choice questions but we are not allowed to use any multiple choice test papers in the classrooms. Many of my colleagues had to go through investigations as they continued using test papers (Source code: Oq1).

The other teachers I interviewed were aware of the restrictions, but did not understand why MoNE was so strict about using test papers or supplementary materials which until recently helped them prepare their students for the centralised

examinations. Ünal, an educational administrator working in a provincial directorate of MoNE, explained that MoNE's action towards supplementary books was politically oriented:

In today's Turkey, the publishers of many supplementary books including test papers are affiliated with one centre¹⁹. As there is now a large-scale conflict between the government and this centre, the government is following a strict policy of cutting down their sources of income. This conflict has repercussions in the classroom, and constrains teachers' practice and the preparation of students for a test-based centralised exam (Source code: Uq2).

At time of writing, a directive sent to school across the country by MoNE (2016f, No: 76198665/806.99/8494194) confirmed Ünal's claim that the restrictions were politically oriented. In the directive, MoNE provided the list of newspapers, magazines, and the names of publishing companies linked to the Gülen movement, the centre Ünal mentioned in his comment, and demanded that these were not to be used or found in any school.

Use of technology

In the previous section, the findings suggested that there were considerable restrictions over teachers' choice of textbooks and supplementary materials and teachers had little space for action. Hakan, an educational administrator, acknowledged this and then claimed, 'apart from this, teachers are completely free

¹⁹ He means Gülen Cemaat led by Fethullah Gülen who is now in conflict with Turkey's ruling party AKP and the President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

in the class.’ According to Hakan, technology in the classroom provides endless opportunities for teachers to exercise autonomy. We know that as part of the Fatih project, the government planned to provide 45,653 primary and lower secondary schools with interactive whiteboards. At the earlier stages of the project, the government achieved the installation of whiteboards in 3,657 schools with 87,921 classrooms. In 2014 and 2015, MoNE then signed contracts with private companies in order to complete the project and provide 41,996 schools and 347,367 classrooms with interactive whiteboards.

Almost all the classrooms I visited during the observation study had interactive whiteboards and Internet access. However, all the teachers in my observation study sample made use of a specific tool called Morpha Campus, which uses the interactive boards. Morpha Campus is an educational platform designed to support primary and lower secondary teachers and all the activities conform to the centralised curriculum. The teachers I interviewed reported that rather than using any other sources, they use what is already available to them. It is understandable that teachers may prefer doing this to reduce their workload and this does not necessarily indicate any lack of agency. However, the teacher interview data suggested that this was not simply an individual choice by teachers, but was an outcome of other underlying structure, a culture of compliance in Turkish schools. Özlem, for instance, stated that she did not want to take a risk by using any other materials. Derya made a very similar comment: ‘MoNE has an agreement with Morpha Campus. There are short videos, cartoons, and songs. The website is under MoNE’s control, so I do not take any risks. Why should I, anyway?’ (Source code: Dq17). Morpha Campus is not necessarily a restrictive structure, however as a

result of the concerns being expressed, some of the teachers in my observation and interview sample felt safer by limiting their choices entirely to Morpha Campus.

Moreover, the analysis of observation data showed that the teachers in my sample had to deal with a number of technical problems in the classroom. When confronted with such problems, it was the teachers' turn to use their own discretion, take initiatives or make changes to improve the situation. Özlem, for instance, had a problem connecting to the Internet in every classroom I visited with her; or there was an issue with the interactive board or the overhead projector. Each time she faced these problems, she swiftly considered her options such as moving the pupils to another classroom and made changes to her lesson. In another example witnessed when observing Sema, the following dialogue was recorded (Source code: Sq6):

Sema: I am coming here again about the projector. It is not working [she sounded very embarrassed as she said this].

Deputy head teacher: Yes, it needs to be fixed. I cannot do anything now; the lamp in it needs to be changed.

Sema: I need to use it now; can't we move the students to another classroom for the time being?

Deputy head teacher: We don't have a spare classroom.

Sema: But we have done this before, we moved the students before.

Deputy head teacher: I will call someone to look at the device.

The above example shows how technology, which supports teacher autonomy can constrain it by a combination of centralised control, inadequate maintenance and technical malfunction and how teachers may try to find ways for improving situations using their agency. Overall, this means that technology in the classroom act as a way for the teachers in my observation sample to exercise autonomy, but not in a manner one would generally expect.

Teaching methods

The survey questionnaire data did suggest that teaching methods were an area of activity over which teachers had control. Derya, one of the teachers who participated in the interview study agreed and made the following comment:

Today I was supposed to teach 10 words. How I teach or what I use is down to me so I took the students to the schoolyard and taught the verbs using a ball. This is the level of freedom I have. As a teacher I have a say over which teaching techniques, methods, strategies to use (Source code: Dq4)

Similarly, the head teachers, Serkan, Ali and Hüseyin and the educational administrator Hakan thought teachers had autonomy in choosing teaching methods and techniques. Serkan commented that teachers had to use the textbooks but classrooms were also equipped with the latest technology and they could use different sources, or methods and make use of existing opportunities for autonomy. Serkan also added that teachers could not be limited to using specific teaching methods if doing something different is going to be of some use to the students' learning. Ali also made similar comments: 'English teachers have freedom over how they teach things. For example, I had seen an example of a teacher who asked her

students to bring food to the classroom and label it with English names. This was a very effective teaching method' (Source code: ALq8). Deniz, an educational administrator, implied that teachers had freedom in their use of methods and techniques: 'Teachers must be able to compare what they have learnt in their teacher training courses and the conditions and needs of the specific context they are in, and develop an appropriate teaching method' (Source code: DEq3).

Despite the affirmative statements of some of the head teachers and educational administrators, the analysis of teacher interview data revealed some further insights, which suggested that parents could impede the exercise of autonomy by teachers in relation to their use of teaching methods. Özlem, for instance, was very frustrated that parents were seeking to influence the amount of writing that took place in the classroom and the amount of homework she gave to her students:

I recommend writing methods to my students. They need to write all the words they have learnt several times so they can memorise them, but parents are not happy and I have received lots of complaints so far, which is a hindrance on exercising my autonomy ... You can ignore the pressure to some extent, but later the head teacher or other management staff get involved. (Source code: Oq2)

As a result, Özlem reported that she was trying to be extra careful in her relationship with parents:

I have received so many complaints from the parents so far. These were made directly to the management, thankfully not to the 147-complaint line. I am sure this will happen sooner or later, though. Because every teacher is receiving one of these nowadays. I think parents take advantage of the

system and they abuse it. When they are concerned about a very unimportant thing or if they are upset about anything, this can be even a simple conflict between the parent and the teachers, they use the complaint line. We then have to deal with the inspectors coming to the school without checking the situation in advance with the teacher (Source code: Oq3)

When she receives a warning or a complaint, Özlem said she would reduce the amount of homework, but she commented that each complaint made against teachers as well as negative attitudes of parents towards them were detrimental to her work motivation and were diminishing her love of teaching.

In her lament, Özlem mentions ‘the 147 complaint-line.’ This is a MEBİM ALO 147 telephone line set up by MoNE. In an article published in a popular Turkish newspaper, Doğan (2012) claimed that since it was established, the 147 line had received a huge amount of complaints about teachers and as a result of this, investigations of about 500 teachers had been opened. On a visit to the MEBİM ALO 147 centre in 2013, the former Minister of National Education, Nabi Avcı, argued that this line served not only parents and students, but also teachers and head teachers (Türkiye-Eğitim, 2013). According to Nabi Avcı, the telephone line was wrongly perceived as a tool for complaining about teachers. The following year, in 2014, MoNE (2014d) sent a notification to provincial governors nationwide and asked them to remind the community that the 147-telephone line must be used for consultation purposes only. However, the line still seems to be a matter of concern for teachers and is experienced by teachers like Özlem as limiting their exercise of autonomy in some aspects of their lives within the school premises.

The interview I had with Sema also showed that parents exert influence over the exercise of autonomy by teachers irrespective of their use of the 147-complaint line. In the interview Sema mentioned an incident that had happened a while ago, which was still upsetting her. In this incident, Sema was angry at her students because they did not complete a task she had set them. She explained that this was necessary for her to start a discussion about a topic in the classroom. The parents were involved and she was reported to the head teacher. After she was reported to the head teacher, she thought that she was not emotionally strong enough to go into that classroom again and discussed this with the head teacher who was quite understanding towards her. Overall, the study findings suggest that teachers are relatively free in relation to their use of teaching methods in the classroom. Nevertheless, it is apparent that parents can influence teachers' exercise of autonomy in relation to teaching methods by limiting their agency. When constrained by parents, teachers appear to prefer not to rebel against them for the reasons reported, such as avoiding further conflict with the school management or the reception of complaints via the 147-telephone line.

5.3.4.2 Assessment

Two themes were identified in the data in relation to assessment: in-class assessment and TEOG.

In-class assessment: distortions of autonomy

According to the regulation of Primary Education Institutions (2014), students in lower secondary schools take two exams from subjects with three or less than three weekly teaching hours; and three exams from those subjects with more than three

weekly teaching hours. The subject teachers set these exams. Furthermore, students also take three exams in Year 8 in lower secondary schools. The subject teacher sets the first and second exams and the third is the centralised examination TEOG that is set by MoNE. Students are also assessed by their teachers for their participation in lessons and project homework (MoNE, 2014b). 70% of TEOG results and 30% of teacher assessment results contribute to the students' overall results at the end of the year in Year 8, which then determine the types of high school, students can gain admission to. Neither the English language teaching curriculum nor any other policy documents contain any information limiting teachers' use of assessment activities in the classroom. This suggests that teachers of English are relatively free in relation to in-class assessment choices they make. Özlem's words also suggested this: 'My neighbour's daughter got 30 out of 100 from her own teacher. I tested her, too and I used the exam paper I prepared myself. She got 90. The assessment techniques and styles vary from one teacher to another' (Source code: Oq7).

Teacher testimony revealed that this freedom might lead to the emergence of distorted forms of teacher autonomy. Some of the teachers in my interview sample reported that they inflated exam results in order to boost students' TEOG results and to increase their overall school success. In the words of Derya, for instance: 'MoNE is preparing the exam in Çankaya, the best town in Ankara, but I am not working or living in the best town or the best city. I am not teaching in the best school either. The assessment activities I prepare are according to my students' levels' (Source code: Dq1b). She later explains this a little further:

For example, the grandfather of one of my student passed away just a week before the school closed and that week, just a day later, the centralised

exam was due. How much could this child do in the exam? He was taken out of school just a day before and was unable to obtain a doctor's certificate. I had no other option but to give him a higher mark in order to balance the situation, but those preparing or doing the exams in Ankara have no idea about the realities of our students. (Source code: Dq2)

Sema also said she could not be strict when marking exam papers,

I do give extra marks. You may find this outrageous but I know that these students are not working towards TEOG. They have no such aim. If they did, I think I would try to be more objective. (Source code: Sq2)

She thinks it is okay to give these students extra marks, because these students are not particularly high achievers and have no targets such as doing very well in TEOG and getting admission to a good high school. Another teacher interviewee [anonymised for the purposes of confidentiality], on the other hand, inflates exam results in order to maximise students' possibilities of getting into a better high school: 'I set an exam the other day. All my students did really badly so I threw the papers in the bin. Normally I am not allowed to do this, but they needed to do better' (Source code: AnonymisedQ3). This teacher is determined to help her/his students in many ways. Students in lower secondary schools are required to do project homework each term. S/he argues that this is a waste of time for a student studying towards TEOG: 'It takes almost a month to complete. What I do instead is to pretend the homework was done, submitted and marked' (Source code: AnonymisedQ4).

This teacher seems to allow herself a great deal of flexibility and creates spaces for herself where s/he can use discretion. S/he claimed that having flexibility in the classroom depended on many factors:

I have got the flexibility but how can I say? You know when something happens in a family, it stays in the family. It is the same in our classrooms. The students trust my goodwill and me. I trust them too. We have known each other for about 5 years. Especially with year 8s we have shared so much. I also know the parents very well, what they are capable of and what they are not. Parents also know me very well and trust my goodwill. But if one of the parents was to say their child had not done any project homework and questioned how I had given this mark, well in that case I would have lots of questions that I cannot answer. I am not doing this because I have the right to be flexible. This is illegal but inescapable. I have to use discretion; otherwise I will be a robot not a teacher. (Source code: AnonymisedQ5)

Previously, it was reported parents might inhibit teachers' exercise of autonomy particularly in relation to teaching methods, as the above comment suggests, in the case of Derya, parents positively influence Derya's exercise of autonomy by not exerting any influence on her classroom practice.

Finally, Hüseyin, one of the head teachers I interviewed, also commented that in teacher focus group meetings, the results of teacher assessments and TEOG were compared, with discussions of any big differences between them. Hüseyin added, 'in some cases, we have seen examples of students getting higher marks in teacher assessed exams but lower marks in TEOG and these are being investigated' (Source code: HUq1). Overall, in-class assessment is an area of activity where teachers enjoy some degree of autonomy.

TEOG

TEOG's damaging influence on teacher behaviour in relation to assessment has been touched on in the previous sections in this chapter. Its full impact is dealt with here with an emphasis on how the teachers in my sample responded to TEOG and the limitations TEOG introduced to their classroom practice. This study found that TEOG constrained teachers' exercise of agency in many different ways, thus hindering spaces for exercising teacher autonomy. The teachers in my interview sample, for instance, argued that;

- ✚ They were experiencing a great deal of pressure from parents and school management due to TEOG and this restricted their use of discretion in the classroom;
- ✚ It had negative impact on teachers' relationships with each other;
- ✚ It influenced their use of teaching methods and techniques;
- ✚ TEOG narrowed any spaces teachers could create for taking initiatives and teaching beyond the curriculum as they felt necessary or appropriate.

First, the teachers who participated in my interview study were generally concerned about TEOG and mentioned how it restricted their use of discretion in the classroom. Mehmet, for example, thinks TEOG results do not reflect how well students learn and he continues:

Because of TEOG results, there is lots of pressure towards teachers from the families. They judge the performance of school management by how many students have been successful in TEOG. The success of teachers, on

the other hand, is not evaluated based on what they have been able to teach but how many of his/her students have been able to pass the exam. If students fail, we are under the hammer (Source code: Mq2).

Mehmet further commented that both parent and school collaboration and the role of parents in the learning journey of students are very important but parents can become a hindrance to the teacher. When talking about TEOG exams, Mehmet said that there was a great deal of pressure from parents because if their children failed the exam, teachers were the first ones to take the blame. He also stated that when there was pressure from parents, this brought pressure from the school management as well. Deniz, an educational administrator, confirmed this:

TEOG is an indicator of teacher and school success. We publicise all the successful students on our website which gives the public some idea about which schools are better than others. If a pupil answered 4 questions correctly out of 10, it is quite normal to question the skills and expertise of the teacher (Source code: DEq2).

Serkan, one of the head teachers I interviewed, also reported:

A student gets 95 out of 100 in the Maths section of TEOG but gets a lower mark in English. In that case we investigate if the problem is caused by this student's lack of language learning abilities or anything else. If this is valid for the whole classroom of students, we discuss this with the English teacher of this classroom. It is then obvious that the source of this problem is the teacher. In that case our request to the teacher is to review his/her methods of teaching. Last year, our students performed really badly in English. This

year we encouraged our teachers to do things differently and success rates in TEOG have risen by about 15% in English (Source code: SERq1).

As well as the pressure TEOG imposes on teachers, the data showed that TEOG had an impact on teachers' relationships. From the beginning, this thesis has argued that teachers do not work in isolation and their exercise of autonomy involves a relational dimension as well as an individual one. It has also been established earlier in this thesis (e.g. Chapter 3, Section 3.3) that teachers' working relations with others can be influential in what they do in schools, the decisions they make or the spaces they create for autonomy. This suggests that TEOG's damaging influence on teachers' relationship diminishes the exercise of autonomy by teachers. Ünal, an educational administrator, explains how this happens: 'Because of the pressure, all the teachers want to teach in the promising classes and this is changing the dynamic of staffroom and eroding its peaceful culture (Source code: Uq3a) He then added:

You can witness a teacher saying they gave me the bad class and took the good ones. There are more important things English teachers must discuss and think over. For instance, whether it is the responsibility of English teachers to teach English Language or to teach to the centralised exam TEOG, which is prepared by MoNE and there are doubts over its effectiveness. (Source code: Uq3b)

Sema also told me an example of conflict with colleagues due to TEOG:

The management gave the responsibility of choosing which classes to teach to the English teachers this year. I was in favour of equal distribution of year 8 classes, but my colleagues wanted me to get all the year 8s. As we were

not able to arrive at an agreement, we had to visit the head teacher. He said he could have easily prepared the lesson timetable without consulting us but he wanted it to accord with our wishes. At the end, year groups were distributed equally amongst us (Source code: Sq4).

Sema described this processes saying, 'we really made each other upset' and the relationship between her and her colleagues went from good to bad suddenly.

The study findings suggest that the impact of TEOG is not limited to the pressure teachers feel about students' success rates or the relationships they have with their colleagues. It also prevented the teachers in my interview sample from broadening or making adjustments to the curriculum. In relation to the curriculum content, there was some variance in the responses of the survey participants as presented previously in this chapter (Section, 5.2.2). While some were able to find space and time to teach the things they liked in addition to those in the curriculum, this was not possible for half of them. Similarly, while half of the participants never had the flexibility to teach additional things to those in the curriculum, others stated they always, or frequently did. However, the head teachers and educational administrators in my interview sample commented that teachers had the flexibility to make adjustments to the curriculum. Hakan, for instance, said:

Teachers have to follow the curriculum programme that MoNE provided, but they can also use discretion in order to make their lessons more efficient (...) if there were no curriculum, teachers would not be able to keep up with each other and this would create chaos (Source code: Hq3).

For Serkan, a head teacher, mixed ability classes offer an opportunity for teachers to use their discretion in the classroom: 'When necessary, teachers can teach things in addition to what we have already got in the curriculum. They can even teach the next year's course in accordance with students' levels' (Source code: SERq2)

However, Serkan adds: 'teachers prefer not to go beyond the curriculum programme because they do not want to digress from the course subject and proceed to uncertainty ... they have achievement criteria anyway, going beyond this is like making an effort for nothing' (Source code: SERq2). Deniz, an educational administrator made a similar comment: 'Teachers tend to do the things they are generally expected to do and are not going beyond this. This is likely to depend on how the school context they are in operates, or the head teachers. It can also be a matter of individual preference.' (Source code: DEq4)

The head teachers and educational administrators in my interview sample thought that teachers had flexibility, whereas the perspective of the teachers who were interviewed was different particularly in relation to Year 8 classes. Teachers indicated that they were most unlikely to practise the flexibility to make adjustments to the curriculum content due to TEOG. Özlem, for instance, commented that 'I teach all the curriculum topics one by one for year 8 without skipping even one and making sure that all is learnt.' Derya said she had run extra tuition for her year 8 groups of students in order to teach all the curricular topics. Some of the head teachers and educational administrators agreed with the teachers on this point. Serkan, a head teacher, for instance said:

English teachers have to adhere to the fixed teaching timetable for preparing students for TEOG. Like other subjects, there is a schedule for the number

of hours that will be spent on each English topic. We pass the timetable to the teachers and we require confirmation [that these are covered at the end of the term] from them. Teachers have to teach all the topics in that timetable prior to the exam (Source code: SERq3).

Similarly, an official document sent to the schools by MoNE on 13/09/2013 (MoNE, 2013b) demanded explicitly that teachers implement the curricular programme in scrupulous detail. Schools were also sent a fixed schedule (MoNE, 2013c) on the same date, clearly stating what to teach and when. In addition to this, Serkan comments that it is the school management's duty to ensure that this has been done by the end of the term: 'One week before the exam, we demand confirmation whether those subjects are completed or not.' Ünal explains it is the teachers' main responsibility to complete the curriculum in Year 8: 'If a question is asked in TEOG on a unit that the teacher has skipped, students will not be able to answer that question correctly.'

5.3.4.3 School structure

Three themes were identified in the data and these are grouped under the school structure category. These are: School committees, involvement in decisions relating to timetabling, and teacher collaboration.

School committees

The policy documents analysed for this study clearly provide evidence for the view adopted in this thesis that teachers fulfil a number of roles in schools and that their professional lives should not be limited to the classrooms. There are a number of

school committees, where teachers can potentially take active roles and achieve agency. This could then lead to the emergence of teacher autonomy. These are listed in the following table (Table 7):

Committees and roles	Regulations and directives	Details
School management and development teams	The regulation on Primary Education Institutions ²⁰ (MoNE, 2014b)	At least two teachers along with head teachers, parents, and students take part in school management and development team. Their role is to plan, organise and pursue any duties within the framework provided for the development of the school.
School and family collaboration committee & School and family scrutiny committee	The regulation on Family and School Collaboration (MoNE, 2012b)	Head teacher, one of the deputy head teachers, parents and a teacher takes part in school and family collaboration committee. School and family scrutiny committee inspects the work of the family and school collaboration committee and reports to MoNE if expenses are occurred in accordance with the regulations and laws. The committee is composed of two teachers chosen by the Board of Teachers and a parent.
Evaluation of school head	The regulation on the appointment of school head	Regardless of school levels, the most senior and most junior teachers in a school, chosen by the Board of

²⁰ The regulation of Primary Education Institutions covers school levels including kindergarten, primary (Year 1,2,3,and 4) and lower-secondary schools (Year 5,6,7, and 8).

teachers	teachers (MoNE, 2015c)	Teachers, take part in evaluating their head teacher who has completed four years of service in their school.
Valuation of portables committee	The regulation on portable equipment (MoNE, 2007b)	The committee is responsible for registering and controlling portable equipment within the school. It is composed of at least two teachers and a student.
Total quality management committee & Total quality improvement committee	The directive on total quality management and implementation (MoNE, 1999)	These committees are composed of three to ten teachers and aims to develop ideas and suggestions regarding problems faced at school; the members of the committees are responsible for designing, planning, and improving schools.
School café inspection committee	The directive on the inspection of cafes at schools and rules for maintaining hygiene (MoNE, 2007c)	The committee members are chosen by the Board of Teachers and inspect the school café at least once a year in accordance with the form designed by MoNE.
Committee for identifying resources and books for the school library	The Regulation on School Libraries (MoNE, 2001b)	The committee is composed of a head of focus groups, head teacher, and the teachers running the library club, a member of the school-family collaboration committee, a student representative and a library officer.
Committee for purchasing items (and dealing with	The regulation on Primary Education Institutions (MoNE, 2014b)	At least three teachers take part in this committee along with the school accountant.

small repairs)		
Teacher guard duty	The regulation on Primary Education Institutions (MoNE, 2014b)	According to the Ministry of Education Primary Education Institutions Regulation, school guard duty is one of the duties every teacher takes on unless one has completed 20 years of teaching service in the case of females and 25 years of teaching in the case of males. The duty of teacher guards covers helping the school management in anything relating to management and education; monitoring teacher attendance; ensuring the heating, electricity and sanitary systems function as normal; monitoring students during breaks and maintaining discipline; covering colleagues who miss their classes for whatever reasons.

Table 7 School committees

Emre, an educational administrator, commented about these committees and said it was easier to achieve things when teachers were involved in decisions, because only then did they develop ownership and feel responsible for the consequences of these decisions. Another educational administrator, Ahmet, claimed teacher involvement in school-wide issues might have the potential to change the educational environment altogether:

Some of the teachers have leadership qualities and fulfil many other tasks in schools and get involved in various activities. These teachers influence the context they work in and their colleagues positively. Even if one of their

colleagues is appointed to a different school in a different city, s/he takes away the positive attitudes s/he has developed in his/her current school to his/her new school context. (Source code: AHq1)

However, despite the presence of opportunities for teacher involvement in issues outside the classroom, the interviewees suggested that participation in these committees varied depending on teachers' individual choices and the attitude of head teachers. Ali, one of the head teachers I interviewed, commented that actively participating in school management was a choice made by an individual teacher:

If teachers want to do more at school in addition to their classroom work, they have lots of opportunities. The doors are wide open; however some of the teachers stay within the walls of the classroom and others go beyond. (Source code: ALq2)

Emre, an educational administrator, thought that some teachers generally tended to limit themselves and their energies to the classrooms. According to Ediz, another educational administrator, involvement in school-wide issues was seen as a waste of time by these teachers. He continued:

It is like a Pygmalion effect. They do not see their involvement in school management as necessary or significant. They believe that whatever they do, their views will not be taken into account at all. (Source code: EDq1)

In addition to individual teacher preferences, which might influence the degree of teacher involvement in school management – as indicated by some of the head teachers and the educational administrators in my sample – Ünal thought head teachers might have a strong influence on this process:

While in some schools, strict discipline and a hierarchical organisation are present, there is more democracy in others. If a democratic school culture is adopted in a school, then teachers could take part in school management. Otherwise, only those teachers close to school management, in other words to the head teacher can take part in school management. Participation or involvement in school management occurs within a narrow framework.

(Source code: Uq5)

Hüseyin's words show that the views of head teachers about the teachers and their motivation can be particularly important: 'We do not involve teachers in school management, or in the preparation of the teaching timetable. Even attending the focus group meetings is a big hassle for our teachers' (Source code: HUq2).

The contributions of the teacher interviewees suggest that, for them, the point that needs to be focused on was the actual establishment of these committees within schools and the role of the head teachers. All the teachers I interviewed believed these teams or committees were nothing more than a matter of formality within their working lives and their involvement in them did not make much difference. Derya's comments were noteworthy:

These were merely so-called committees and just another source of paper work for teachers (...) the team members do not come together and work on something. Well, yes they come together just to sign papers. The decision would have already been taken and they sign the papers. (Source code:

Dq6)

Derya further commented:

We have a notebook here in the staff room. You must see that. There are a number of committees recorded in there: the school cafeteria inspection committee, the committee for increasing student success, the committee for managing student behaviour. We have magnificent committees but teachers who are assigned to one of these do not do anything other than signing pre-prepared papers (Source code: Dq6a).

When I asked Gizem, if she can choose what activities to participate in at the school, she made a similar comment. She said 'the head teacher chooses who takes a role in which school committees, but at the end of the day the teacher needs to approve it too or, in other words, should not oppose it' (Source code: Gq5). Similarly, during the observation study I undertook in Mehmet's school, I witnessed an example of this. Mehmet usually used his breaks to smoke, but as he was having his packed lunch standing in the staffroom, he came to find out the news. He was given a paper to sign:

Mehmet: What is this?

A member of staff: Children games club is opened. You will be running it.

Mehmet: What the hell do I know about children's games? [He said these words as he signed the paper confirming that he will run the club.]

Ünal, an educational administrator, thinks this is exactly the reason why the school committees do not function well:

In most schools, [the head teacher] is oppressive and authoritative rather than democratic. So teachers are not asked if they want to take part in school management and development teams - the management simply

declares who is running which team and puts it up on the noticeboards in the staffrooms. This is why these teams do not function well. (Source code: Uq6)

However, as the response Mehmet gave to the staff member who asked him to sign the paper indicates, the problem does not seem to be solely the management style of the head teacher, but the way in which the teachers respond to the management style of the head teachers and whether they make an effort to change the existing structures. The findings pertaining to the role of head teachers will be reported in detail in the next section.

Involvement in decisions relating to timetabling

The interview study showed that teachers are involved in decisions relating to timetabling and in some cases in decisions relating to the choice of year groups. Serkan, a head teacher, thinks the management style adopted by the head teachers can influence teachers' spaces for action:

Teachers can be involved in decisions on which classes and year groups they are going to teach, but this varies from one school to another. If there is a democratic management style present at school and trust built between the management and the teachers, there will not be any issues or problems. But some head teachers adopt a management style which allows them to hold all the power in their hands and not let teachers have a say over things (Source code: SERq4).

Serkan saw teachers as the key to success:

For that reason in the first place I need to make sure that our teachers are happy about their work at school. If the teacher is not happy about the teaching timetable this affects their performance. Therefore I am in favour of teachers' involvement in school issues (Source code: SERq5).

The survey data suggested that more often than not, teachers are not involved in decisions relating to timetabling. Some of the teachers in my interview sample, however, said they had a say over their timetable, in particular. Derya, for instance, commented:

We have a say over timetabling. I mean we make requests and if the management agrees, they go ahead. It is also important that colleagues must agree too. If the timetable we requested does not fit with the needs and suggestions of other colleagues then what we want cannot be considered (Source code: Dq7).

The interviews with the teachers showed that they enjoy having a say over their timetabling. Sema's and Özlem's comments were very similar to Derya's. Sema, for instance, said some of her colleagues preferred not to teach in the mornings, but she chose to do the morning teaching so that she could have the rest of the day for herself. Özlem, on the other hand, said she did not like waking up too early, so would try to avoid morning sessions as much as possible and plan her weekly schedule accordingly. In this chapter (Section 5.2.4.2), we also saw an example of teacher involvement in decision relating to the choice of year groups. Sema had described the process of how she and her colleagues were not able to make a decision due to TEOG pressure and made each other upset.

According to the data, involvement in decisions in schools generally depended on head teachers and their use of discretion. While some head teachers enable teacher agency by providing opportunities for them to become involved in issues relating to timetabling, others may constrain their agency by blocking opportunities. Teachers' responses to these constraints are often in the form of negotiations or compliance with the head teacher. The study also found an example of how teachers can limit their own spaces for action despite the opportunities provided by the head teacher for exercising autonomy.

The findings indicate that involvement in these decisions happens through negotiation with head teachers and in some cases with other teachers. Mehmet, for instance, is one of the English teachers whom I both observed in his school context and interviewed. At the time of interviewing and observing, Mehmet taught four days a week and did not work on Fridays. During the first hours of my observation, I witnessed how this was negotiated. After Mehmet finished teaching his first class, he went to have a smoke. When he came back to the staffroom, he found out that the weekly timetable was changed. According to the new timetable, he had to teach full time on Thursdays. He objected to the new timetable and argued that on Thursdays he was the school guard. One of the teachers joked with him that he came to the school so rarely that the head teacher wants to see him more often. The following dialogue was recorded between the deputy head teacher and Mehmet:

Mehmet: Can't we change the timetable again?

Deputy head teacher: No, that would not be possible; but I can change the day of your school guard work.

Mehmet: But...

Deputy head teacher: [Silence]

Mehmet: Ok, sort this out in one way or another, please.

Deputy head teacher: Your school guard duty will be on Mondays, done?

Mehmet: Well, okay.

As we walked towards the same classroom, Mehmet seemed a bit uncomfortable. He said that he does not teach on Fridays, because he needs to take care of his parents on that day. He came to know about this timetable change on the day when he was teaching: 'I had no idea that this was changed and nobody told me about it. They put all the blame on me now' (Source code Mq9). A few hours later, at the end of another class, Mehmet was ready to leave and I was right behind him. We came across the deputy head teacher in front of the classroom and as Mehmet asked if the problem was sorted out now, the head teacher grabbed his arm and came up to him, pretending to punch Mehmet. He was certainly joking, and I was not sure if this was something that happened often. Mehmet, however, seemed very embarrassed. As he smoked another cigarette outside the school, he talked about the incident very briefly: 'I have to take things easy so that they will spare me Fridays' (Source code Mq10). What this suggests is that good relationships with the management can influence the degree of teacher involvement in timetabling the use of one's time.

Moreover, the interview with Gizem provided evidence about how head teachers might attempt to block teacher involvement in timetabling. Involvement in timetabling had not been possible for Gizem who explained:

I have got a problem with the weekly lesson timetable. I wanted to discuss this with the head teacher and went to his office. I told him that I was receiving dental treatment and needed a day each week to continue my treatment. My workload is not heavy at all. I have only got 19 hours to teach. I explained this to him in a pleasant manner, but he said he cannot rearrange the timetable for me and he would not do this for anyone else either. (Source code: Gq3)

She continued: 'I knew that he used discretion and that some of my colleagues do not come to the school every day' (Source code: Gq6). Gizem explained that the head teacher was a bit reluctant but he later said that he would see what he could do. Gizem continued that her meeting with the head teacher went on after this issue was almost resolved:

He loves giving advice to younger teachers just like all other head teachers. He said our worldviews are not similar; they are quite different from each other. He began talking like this and then implied that he is not happy with my work at school. He complained that I do not want to participate in any social activity (Source code: Gq4)

According to Gizem, the head teacher had strong religious and political views and this was the reason why he was trying to exclude her from any decision-making responsibility over her work at school. In some cases, Gizem explained, he was very strict about her clothing as well. Gizem had received a few indirect warnings: 'A few times he said he does not want clothing that causes provocation and harassment. This made me feel sick' (Source code: Gq7). As a result of the exclusion and limited negotiation that was available to her, Gizem said she did not really feel comfortable

in the school she has been working in. It is obvious that the head teacher had reduced the spaces for Gizem to exercise autonomy and that this then demoralised her and resulted in her having negative feelings towards the school and experiencing a lack of ownership towards what was happening there. Furthermore, all the participant teachers expressed the view that it was very important for them to get involved in decisions relating to their weekly teaching timetables. This was for several reasons, such as staying focused and motivated in their professional lives, keeping up with family commitments and continuing medical treatments.

Teacher collaboration

As established in Chapter 3, collaboration, which can be defined as the act of solving problems collaboratively (Xu, 2015), is an important aspect of teacher autonomy, which has also emerged in all the interviews undertaken with English teachers, head teachers and educational administrators. The data provided insights not only about the spaces available to teachers for working collaboratively, but also about whether they would take any additional action to create a collaborative work environment. This study found that teachers saw their work environments as offering very limited space for collaboration. The head teachers, educational administrators in my sample and policy documents, however, suggested the opposite.

A number of strategies are outlined in policy documents, which encourage collaboration. Similarly, the competency framework for English teachers developed by MoNE (2008) stresses that competent English teachers must be able to work collaboratively with families, acquire leadership qualities, and take part in activities

for making the schools they are working in centres for culture and learning. Some of the opportunities for collaboration emerging from an analysis of policy documents are as follows:

Title	Document source	Details
Counsellor teachers group (teaching to the same group of students)	The Regulation on Primary Education Institutions (MoNE, 2014b)	Working in collaboration with other teachers on any issues relating to the students.
Board of Teachers	The Regulation on Primary Education Institutions (MoNE, 2014b)	The Board of Teachers meets three times a year. The school head teacher chairs the meetings and determines the topics of discussion. These can include student attendance, assessment, or action plans for improving success rates.
Board of Teachers teaching the same subjects/ Teacher focus group	The Regulation on Primary Education Institutions (MoNE, 2014b)	The committee is composed of teachers teaching the same subject (e.g. English). The committee chooses its chair at the beginning of the academic year. Some of the topics discussed by the committee: the planning of lessons in accordance with the curriculum; teaching materials, homework, teaching methods and techniques, problems faced when implementing the curriculum
Board of Subject Teachers	The Regulation on Primary Education Institutions	This committee is composed of teachers teaching in the same classrooms with the same group of students (e.g. English, Maths, Science teachers) and deals with their health

	(MoNE, 2014b)	concerns, social relations, and behaviour issues. Parents and some students can be invited to take part in the committee.
The committee for assessing student behaviour	The Regulation on Primary Education Institutions (MoNE, 2014b)	Teachers work to help students acquire positive behaviours and avoid negative ones.
The committee for social activities	The Regulation on social activities (MoNE, 2005c)	This committee is composed of teachers, parents and students and chaired by one of the deputy head teachers.
Committee for Ceremonies and Celebrations	The Regulation on Social Activities (MoNE, 2005c)	This committee works to organise programmes for national ceremonies and celebrations. All teachers have to attend these ceremonies unless a medical certificate is obtained.
Advising and guidance board	The Regulation on Advising and Guidance in Primary Education (MoNE, 2005d)	This board provides guidance and advice to the students to help them discover their needs and interests and understand that academic success shapes their futures.

Table 8 Opportunities for collaboration within the Turkish education system

In relation to these committees, all the teachers of English interviewed commented: 'These are on paper'/ 'None works properly.' Despite negative teacher comments, the study found that the head teachers and the educational administrators held favourable views about the Board of Teachers, in particular, and saw its functioning as a very good example of how teachers were involved in decisions relating to the school and as a potential space for collaboration. Hakan, an educational administrator, for instance, explained:

The Board of Teachers is a meeting attended by all teachers and head teachers. Providing decisions of the board members do not conflict with constitutional law, they are always implemented. I mean they are implemented if agreed on a majority vote. This means teachers get directly involved in the process of school management [...] Moreover teachers can comfortably express themselves at teachers' board meetings and take part in decision-making. (Source code: Hq5)

Ali, a head teacher, confirmed Hakan's words by saying, 'during the Board of Teachers meeting, teachers can easily express their views, share ideas. In that case these views are evaluated by the board and implemented' (Source code: ALq7). Ali then gave the following example:

In one of these meetings we were discussing student failure. One of the year groups especially was a matter of concern. One of the teachers suggested that each teacher working in this school should pay close attention to one of the pupils in that year group and guide the pupil. The classroom teacher was not able to cope with 25 students, but when we teachers come together we would make a huge difference. So we did. As a head teacher, I took responsibility for one of the pupils too, and our duty included finding solutions to every kind of problem these children have in their lives including family and friendship issues, comprehension problems, if the child is suffering from school phobia etc. We were able to make a decision together and implement this successfully. (Source code: ALq3)

During my observation study, I had an opportunity to attend one of these meetings. It was towards the end of the day I spent with Sema when one of the staff members

working as part of the management came in with a document and told Sema that the Board of Subject Teachers meeting was going to be held tomorrow. She signed the document confirming that she will attend the meeting. After the class, I asked Sema if I could attend the meeting and she advised me to speak to the head teacher. The head teacher approved my request and I visited the school on the next day to attend the meeting.

The meeting lasted 40 minutes. The head teacher, one of the deputy head teachers and all the subject teachers working in the school were present at the meeting. The head teacher explained that the main purpose of this meeting was to provide guidance on the kinds of topic that need to be covered in teacher focus group meetings. Later, however, a number of different issues were added. These were: student attendance, problems teachers were facing in the classrooms, encouraging teachers to adopt different techniques to achieve greater success in TEOG, discipline, appreciation for teachers' efforts in low-achieving classrooms, consulting each teacher about what else could be done for improving achievement rates, collecting money from the students for photocopies, rewarding students, producing practical solutions together for discipline problems. Consultation was the strategy the head teacher used throughout the meeting and each teacher was listened to carefully. The pressure on English teachers, however, was certainly visible throughout the meeting and they were asked to give more attention to the high achieving students. I understood that the head teacher was very concerned about the TEOG results.

Despite these formal opportunities, some of the teachers in my interview sample insisted that collaboration was not at all possible in their schools. Derya, for instance, commented:

If I have got a class today, you can find me at school. If I do not have a class, I will be at home...our lesson timetable determines who is at school and who is not. We see each other only for 10 minutes in the staff room depending on our weekly teaching timetable. (Source code: Dq8a)

She next gave an example: 'My colleague needs to sign this meeting report [shows the paper she has in her folder in front of her], but for the last 3 days I cannot get hold of him. We do not work together here at all' (Source code: Dq8b). When asked if teachers made an effort to collaborate and whether collaboration could be achieved, Derya said:

Everybody goes home after finishing his/her classes. That's why we do not have a collaborative work culture here. We also do not want to be the odd one out. For example, if I am given the responsibility to run one of these committees [shows a list of committees she has in her folder] and if I ask five of my colleagues whose names are written here under the same committees as me, well then we have to spend the day and the night here in school. We cannot finish this job here. Another thing is that we are a bunch of lazy people; we do not want to do any extra work. (Source code: Dq9)

The comment above suggests that the teachers were only present at school when they had classes to teach. This inhibited the chances of creating a collaborative work environment within schools and blocked potential opportunities for creating spaces for teacher autonomy. According to the Civil Servants Law, a civil servant

must work 40 hours per week, 8 hours per day. Teachers are also subject to Civil Servants Law, but MoNE determines their working hours per week. According to MoNE's regulation on working hours (MoNE, 1998), subject teachers were eligible to get paid on the condition that they teach 15 hours per week. The findings suggested that this created a work environment where the possibility for collaboration was considerably reduced. Derya, for instance, mentioned the struggle she had getting a focus group meeting report signed by one of her colleagues.

Despite the number of committees and focus groups listed previously in this chapter, Mehmet thinks, opportunities for collaboration are already very scarce and teachers do not strive for collaboration:

We cannot determine the content of the curriculum. We cannot choose the kind of materials either. We can only discuss issues related to homework topics, sheets, how homework will be evaluated, how many exams we will set. That's all. But then we have been dealing with the same issues for so many years that we don't really need to make the extra effort. (Source code: Mq4)

To conclude, the data shows that opportunities for collaboration are present within the education system but factors such as teachers' experiences, work environment and interpersonal relations seem to determine the extent of collaboration that occurs. Similarly, these experiences, environment or relations have the potential to diminish or enhance these opportunities.

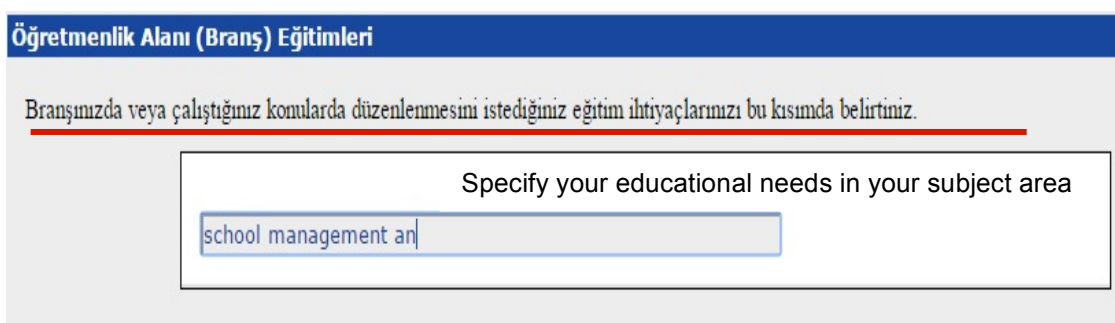
5.3.4.4 Overall structure of MoNE

In Chapter 2 (Section 2.2), the overall structure of MoNE was discussed. It was stated that MoNE is responsible for planning, programming, implementing, monitoring and controlling education and training services targeted at teachers and students in educational institutions at all levels. Nevertheless, an analysis of the documents demonstrated a desire on the part of MoNE to become engaged with teachers. MoNE's top down structure, however, made it difficult to engage in a dialogue and generated some scepticism in the teachers in my interview sample. The findings relating to the overall structure of MoNE will be presented under three sub-themes: professional development and teacher motivation; teacher involvement in curriculum development/evaluation, and dialogue between MoNE and teachers.

Professional development and teacher motivation

The analysis of the documents showed that there were two types of in-service training activities: centralised training and local training (MoNE, 1995a). Centralised training seminars are organised by the General Directorate of Teacher Training and Development. Local training seminars are organised by MoNE's provincial governors and provincial and district directorates. Furthermore, MoNE has implemented a School-based Professional Development Model, which aims to encourage teachers to take responsibilities for their own professional development (MoNE, 2009a). The analysis of the in-service teacher training legislation and a needs analysis survey conducted in 2015 by MoNE suggested that teacher involvement in centralised training programmes was almost non-existent. MoNE conducts a needs analysis survey every year, which shows that it makes efforts to

involve teachers in deciding on the topic of professional development activities. However, it was found in the 2014 needs analysis survey that teachers were asked to choose from a list of pre-determined professional development areas. Teachers were given the freedom to suggest any other training areas if they needed to; but in order to do so they were limited to only 20 characters. The following image is a screenshot from MoNE's survey illustrating the space restriction (Figure 10):



Öğretmenlik Alanı (Branş) Eğitimleri

Branşınızda veya çalıştığınız konularda düzenlenmesini istediğiniz eğitim ihtiyaçlarınızı bu kısımda belirtiniz.

Specify your educational needs in your subject area

school management an

Figure 10 A screenshot from MoNE's need analysis survey

The interviews undertaken with educational administrators provided useful insights into the locally-organised training seminars. It was found that the educational administrators in district directorates use their discretion and involve teachers in this process for local training programmes. Hakan, for instance, insisted: 'If a group of 20 teachers comes to us and requests seminars – for instance on speed reading techniques or drama – we can provide this kind of service, no problem at all. But I have not witnessed any such thing' (Source code: Hq6). However, Ediz, another educational administrator, suggested that teacher involvement in this process could be very limited:

We ask teachers about their professional development needs and they respond to us. But we [MoNE] do not take actions in line with their needs because doing otherwise is easier for us. For instance, for a particular

training request from a group of teachers, I need to invite an expert from Ankara. Due to the bureaucratic procedures and limited budget, it is easier for me to hire someone within the same province who has different expertise. (Source code: EDq2)

None of the English teachers in my interview sample believed they had any control over the content of training seminars. Sema, for instance, made this comment:

I have never thought about making suggestions to MoNE, nor do I recall ever having been asked to make suggestions. If my colleagues and I knew that we would receive an answer, I think we would request or suggest new professional training topics [but experience tells us that], we would not get any response. We wish we would. Positive or negative, any sort of reply. (Source code: Sq7)

Due to lack of teacher involvement in in-service training design or the nature of its content, the teachers in my sample seemed to have lost interest in these training programmes. Derya, for instance, questioned the point of in-service seminars and argued that these were of benefit to no one because they did not answer her needs. 'So-called seminars', she repeated and continued:

Every year we are told to attend a seminar and it always takes place in a well-known high achieving school...last time, for instance, it was on fluent English speaking techniques, as if we were talking in English in the classrooms that we are in need of fluency [laughs]. We have got many other unnecessary seminars. We are asked to attend these for a week (...) at the

end of the week, we are given attendance certificates to add to our training folders and carry on with our lives. (Source code: Dq10)

Özlem made a very similar comment: 'We attend the seminars just to sign the attendance paper' (Source code: Oq10). Deniz, an educational administrator, agreed this and believed the seminars were rarely suited to the needs of the teachers and they had every right to question the quality of them.

However, some of the educational administrators in my sample thought that the problem was not with MoNE's failure to involve teachers in professional development. The problem for Hakan, for instance, was teachers' lack of competency and willingness to develop themselves professionally. 'Teachers do not exercise autonomy over their own professional development because they do not strive for autonomy', Hakan suggested and continued:

There may be some faults in the education system, but I do not want to spare English teachers. As soon as an individual gains the right to study in the English Language Teaching department of a university, s/he does not work hard but just enjoys university life. S/he does not do anything to improve herself or himself or seek something new. (Source code: Hq7)

Hakan commented that there were many English teachers who could not speak in English with a tourist and added that there were many things a teacher could do to improve his/her professional skills. He went on to talk about a recent change in the recruitment of teachers and expressed his views:

As per the latest law no 6528, teachers now have to pass a verbal exam before the end of their probationary period, for the finalisation of their

probation. These requirements I think are very good. At least now English teachers will feel the pressure. They will not feel themselves secure in the feeling that they are now civil servants – colloquially – and that they have got a foot in the door of the government. (Source code: Hq8)

In agreement with Hakan, Ahmet, another educational administrator, commented that he had serious concerns about teachers' willingness to develop themselves professionally. Ediz, an educational administrator had slightly different views and turned his computer on to explain:

We have 20 different in-service educational institutions. Let's have a look at the Basic Education Ministry. As you can see, there are 6 active courses here and within this district there is only one application. It is impossible that teachers do not know that these courses are running... The Ministry even considered the fact that teachers may not be able to attend the training because of their family commitments. We have got distance courses now. (Source code: EDq3)

Ediz continued that it was not teachers' reluctance to develop themselves professionally that accounted for their non-attendance, but the lack of incentives to encourage their participation in training programmes:

The professional development seminars must contribute to the teachers as civil servants as well as to their knowledge and professional growth in their subject. In Turkey, we lack incentives; hence teachers do not give great importance to professional development. (Source code: EDq4)

Finally, this study found that the perceptions of the English teachers who participated in this study were very often limited to in-service training seminars organised and run by MoNE. They did not appear to have any information about School-Based Professional Development Plans despite the fact that MoNE published material and later informed the schools about these. This partly confirms the comments made by the educational administrators previously about teachers' reluctance to develop themselves professionally, but it also raises some questions about the strategies employed both by MoNE and head teachers to keep teachers informed and up-to-date. Nevertheless, it is important to note that factors such as family commitments can play a very important role in teacher's exercise of autonomy in relation to professional development. I conclude this section with Derya's following comment, which suggest that despite efforts of a teacher who create spaces for autonomy in relation to professional development, s/he can be hindered by a number of other factors:

I prepared a Comenius project. I managed to organize the project, which involved Italy, Spain, Greece and Turkey, but then (silence). My son is autistic. I was very concerned about him, so I was not able to put the project into effect. (Source code: Dq11)

Teacher involvement in curriculum development/evaluation

The data in this study showed that the opinions of head teachers and educational administrators in relation to teacher involvement in curriculum development and evaluation differed from those of teachers. Ali, a head teacher, and Hakan, an educational administrator, argued that opportunities for teacher involvement in

curriculum development were available. As an example, Ali mentioned the Council of National Education meetings held in Ankara. He said some teachers and head teachers all over Turkey are invited to these meetings where they can raise their concerns about the curriculum, or express their wishes to participate in this process. Ali also added: 'From time to time, the Ministry undertakes curriculum work in order to get information from teachers about observed deficiencies in the curriculum' (Source code: ALq4). I asked the educational administrators their views about these deficiencies. Hakan confirmed what Ali had already said. When I asked Sema if she had ever contributed to this process, she replied: 'I have 20 years of teaching experience and I have never been involved in this process and have never seen anyone who was or who attended any meeting organized by MoNE for this purpose' (Source code: Sq8). Ünal, an educational administrator with a background in English language teaching, shed more light on the discussion of teacher involvement in the process of curriculum development and redesign through the Council of National Education meetings:

OK, teachers including English teachers are invited but who are these teachers exactly? In my career, I have never seen any such invitation or participated in such a meeting. There is some progress towards involving teachers in a number of areas, but this has not happened about curriculum work at all. In the past, for example, teachers used to get forms to share their views on textbooks. The Ministry used to ask if the teachers were pleased with the textbooks. This was too formal, so were the teachers' comments. (Source code: Uq7)

The teachers in my interview sample thought that no meaningful opportunities existed for them to become involved in the process of curriculum development, Derya, for instance, commented,

We are not involved in the process of curriculum development or re-design.

The curriculum programme is prepared in Ankara. The Board of Education is responsible for doing this. Who exactly decides what goes into it and what does not I have really no idea. I am not even sure if they are English teachers, university tutors. I do not know. (Source code: Dq12)

Derya saw herself as a mere recipient of the curriculum developed by others elsewhere.

When interviewing one of the English teachers [anonymised for the purposes of confidentiality], s/he described an event, which, in his/her view, indicated that there had been some attempts to involve teachers in the process of curriculum evaluation, but the teacher said that this was not a genuine opportunity where teachers' ideas were valued. At this event, the interviewee described, the chairs of focus group meetings were invited to evaluate the newly designed curriculum in previously determined venues. Each venue was under the responsibility of a head teacher and the interviewee explained:

I took this really very seriously. I compared the new curriculum with the old one and prepared a report before the meeting. On the day of the meeting, each subject group such as Mathematics, Science, and English met in one of the rooms and soon after left the rooms one by one. We English teachers spent more than three hours discussing the curriculum. After three hours, the head teacher came in unannounced to see what we were up to. He then

showed us the fax²¹ sent by MoNE. They wanted us to evaluate the curriculum highlighting only the parts we are positive about. This meant that we needed to ignore any drawbacks, but just praise how well the curriculum was designed. (Source code: AnonymisedQ1)

The teacher said after seeing this, they prepared a new short report stating that the curriculum was very suitable. I was curious to know why they did not send the report they had prepared earlier. In response to my question, the teacher said, 'if we did not listen to the head teacher and sent the report anyway, it would have been read by the inspectors first. And as it was not what we were asked to do, they would exclude it from further consideration and throw it in the bin' (Source code: AnonymisedQ6). Primarily because of this experience, this teacher thinks MoNE does not take advantage of the people working with them. 'Even if they do' s/he says, 'they do not consider our thoughts fully.' This teacher insists that if given a chance, teachers can be very useful for MoNE in the process of curriculum development. The incident described here exemplifies how structures constrain agency and, depending on the type of constraint (in this case, an order from higher authorities), how teachers choose to comply with the external demands based on their prejudgments, thus reinforcing the existing structures.

Getting involved in the decisions, which influence what teachers do in the classrooms, seems to be very important for the teachers in my sample. Sema, for instance, wanted to be part of this process, which indicates that she wanted more

²¹ Despite my efforts to find the fax this teacher mentioned in her/his comment, it was not retrievable. However, in a study published by Özdemir (2009), programme evaluation studies carried out by MoNE since 1950s including the one in 2006 criticised for being unsystematic, shallow and lack of quality. This partly confirms the teacher's above comment.

autonomy: 'I would feel that I am given importance as a teacher and I am valued'

(Source code: Sq11) This also suggests that allowing teachers to exercise more autonomy is likely to make them feel valued and would encourage them to take more ownership. According to Özlem, this was very important because:

I have never come to understand who really prepares the curriculum programme. Topics are really above students' levels, and all are so strange. For example, I am teaching brain functions to Year 8s. Right brain, left brain, multiple intelligence... These students do not even know these terms in their mother tongue, but we try to teach them English equivalents. They struggle with vocabulary and this causes students to distance themselves from English. There are more interesting topics that can keep these kids' attention. If only teachers had some say over what goes into the curriculum. (Source code: Oq4)

What can be understood from what Özlem says is that teachers are the people implementing the curriculum in their teaching and are aware of the needs of their students, or the drawbacks of the current curriculum programme. Allowing opportunities for exercising autonomy is likely to benefit the curriculum.

Mehmet also claims that teachers are in a better position than MoNE to respond to students' needs:

The curriculum programme is very detailed and contains lots of topics. But our schools are not composed of homogenous pupils. Classrooms therefore are not homogeneous either. Students come from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Instead of having a very detailed curriculum, we need

something with basic principles and boundaries and the rest must be left to the teacher. Particularly, the length given for each curriculum topic must be at the teacher's discretion. (Source code: Mq6)

Pointing at the structure and lack of continuity between years 4, 5, and 6, Derya commented:

We begin Year 4 with very simple English. When I say simple, I mean really simple. We have got only three hours but the classes are real fun. We play games, we watch cartoons in English and these really help kids' learning of English. Then Year 5 begins, which is a very rough transition for the kids. The things were simple a year ago but then they suddenly get very serious. For that reason it is very tough for them after Year 4. Year 5 finishes and Year 6 begins. We go back to the same topic that they learnt a year ago. We are aware of this, but MoNE is not. (Source code: Dq13)

Involvement in this process of curriculum development can help teachers respond to the needs and interests of students and enhance their autonomy as teachers who are actively monitoring their students and developing their own practice, rather than simply implementing the prescribed curriculum.

Dialogue between MoNE and teachers

This study found that dialogue between teachers and MoNE was scarce and this influenced certain actions the teachers in my sample took or certain decisions they made. Two ways in which teachers are nonetheless able to communicate with

MoNE were identified in the interview study: end of school term reports and English teachers focus group meeting reports.

The teachers in my interview sample stated that at the end of each school term, they must submit an end of term report to MoNE, which demonstrates that they have completed the curriculum programme. The teachers argued that most of the time they were not able to complete the curriculum and concealed this information in the end of term reports they submit to MoNE in order to avoid problems. Derya, for instance, referring to her own experience told me:

When I was pregnant, I did not teach for three months. How can a teacher who has not taught for this many months teach the whole curriculum? So in my report I clearly stated that I failed to teach all the topics due to my pregnancy. The head teacher was angry when he saw the report and asked me to change my statement. He said my report would get us into trouble and defended himself by saying that he asked MoNE to send a supply teacher but they did not. I changed the statement of course and since then I always successfully teach all the curricular topics [laughs]. (Source code: Dq5)

Mehmet makes a similar confession: 'In no school, is any teacher able to teach the curriculum on time and properly. We all pretend that we do. If somebody claims that they teach it all, this can only be possible if they teach the basics of each topic without going into greater detail. But the question is how well students have been able to learn these topics' (Source code: Mq3). The comments Ünal, an educational administrator, made about the end of term reports was interesting:

English teachers have to keep up with the curriculum. It is an official responsibility. I worked as a teacher. I know what things are like. At the end of the school year, teachers submit a written report stating that they have completed the curriculum. Even if it is not completed, we report the contrary. Say there are 80 teachers at a school. All of them report that they were able to teach all the curricular topics, but most of these 80 teachers do not complete it in reality; rather they could not 'complete' [emphasis] it. We state the contrary because MoNE demands an affirmative report from teachers. We always advise our students not to lie, but unfortunately we are forced to lie. Teachers lie because they do not want to be questioned as to why they failed. (Source code: Uq4)

I asked Hakan about the end of term teacher reports and if he has ever seen a teacher falling behind in teaching the curriculum and being questioned. He responded by saying: 'I have never witnessed a teacher being investigated because s/he cannot complete the curriculum. If this happens, there has to be an explanation. The teacher may have a medical certificate. They cannot fall behind intentionally. If this is the case, an investigation is opened. Remedial times can be arranged; revision lessons can be given at the weekends' (Source code: Hq4). Ali, one of the head teachers interviewed argued that it was the teachers' responsibility to report to the management if there was anything going wrong with teaching to the curriculum and if they were falling behind. 'In that case', Ali said, 'we investigate the reasons. Possible causes can include the intensity of the programme or health conditions. Whatever the reason, the curricular topics have to be taught. For that reason, we arrange Saturday or Sunday classes' (Source code: ALq1).

The second way the Turkish education system allows English teachers to communicate to MoNE is through focus group meetings. English teachers working in the same school meet twice a year. These teachers produce a report at the end of each meeting, which includes the issues covered or agreed, concerns, or suggestions for better practice. Each English teachers focus groups in schools chooses a chair at the beginning of the term. The chair is responsible for writing the report. In addition to this, the chair of the focus group meets other chairs from a number of different schools within the same district once a year. Sema explains:

At the end of the year, when English teachers meet at district level, we write another report as a conclusion to the year. For example, the number of English lessons per week for Year 6 used to be four hours but now it is three hours. The time is reduced but the textbook has remained unchanged, as has the curriculum. We cannot finish the textbook on time. (Source code Sq12)

According to Sema, this is the only way to let MoNE hear their concerns. She further comments, 'there is no such thing as direct or individual voice raising. We produce reports at the end of the meetings and these reports are sent to the district directorates of MoNE' (Source code: Sq5). However, none of the English teachers interviewed believed that the authorities read these reports. Özlem, for instance, commented:

I do not really think they take these reports into consideration. This makes me feel as if I am meeting with my colleagues, discussing things, writing reports for nothing. But at least I know that I am doing the right thing. I am

doing my best, I said what needed to be said and they are the ones not taking precautions or improving learning opportunities. (Source code: Oq5)

Moreover, Sema thinks teachers are not valued, but that much is demanded of them:

When we do not get any feedback or response to our reports, I feel that we are not valued as teachers, but then we are expected to deliver our lesson in the best way possible. We are expected to guarantee success in TEOG, but when it comes to our demands, all ears are completely shut. (Source code: Sq9)

What Derya says is very similar to what other teachers have already said, 'we have no hope that anybody reads these reports, but we still write them' (Source code: Dq14) The teachers in my sample sounded very dispirited and disheartened when talking about focus group meetings, so maybe this is the reason why they do not take these meetings very seriously. For example, Derya said, 'we use the district level teacher meetings to catch up with friends and talk about ex-lecturers, friends or ex-boyfriends [laughs]. We don't do anything else really' (Source code: Dq15).

When I asked another teacher interviewee [anonymised for the purposes of confidentiality] if I can attend one of these meetings, the teacher asked me if I really wanted to hear what these meeting were really like and said, 'focus teacher group meeting? It is nothing more than a piece of paper. The chair prepares the paper, we sign it' (Source code: AnonymisedQ2). As opposed to Mehmet and Derya, Özlem insisted that she discusses issues pertaining to their English classes in these meetings but she repeats that she does not think anyone cares about whether they meet or not. She then adds, 'I am the chair of my school's English teacher focus

group and this is extra hassle for me. I have to attend the meetings, share problems and concerns with others at district level. I then need to get the end report back to my school, photocopy it and hand it to my colleagues' (Source code: Oq6).

As part of the discussion about curriculum development, head teachers and educational administrators mentioned teacher focus group meetings. Serkan, for instance, insisted that teachers are involved in decisions about curriculum related issues and this is achieved through subject focus group meetings both at school and district level. He added: 'The decisions agreed on in these meetings are sent to the district and provincial directorates in the form of a list of suggestions.' However, Serkan's comments suggest that the function of subject teacher focus group meetings has changed slightly:

The role of these meetings is now evaluating the results of TEOG, identifying the needs of students and finding out reasons for failure. They are definitely read. For example, last time we demanded reports from the schools about their views on TEOG. We read all the reports one by one from 135 schools and then prepared another report based on these. (Source code: SERq6)

Concerns were voiced by all the English teachers I interviewed about the report they wrote and sent to MoNE at the end of their focus group meetings. I asked the educational administrators' views about these. Hakan answered without any hesitation: 'Of course these are all read.' Ünal, however, claimed the opposite: 'I personally witnessed what happens to these reports including where they go and where they are stored' and he continued:

They are gathered at district national education directorates, inserted into a file and are then sent to the provincial directorates of national education. They are classified into various categories there. For example, those coming from religious education teachers submitted from Religious Vocational Schools are filed separately and those from lower-secondary schools put into another file. They are sent sometimes to the strategic planning department and sometimes to other departments. These files stay there untouched unless Ankara orders them to be analysed and sent to their main office. We do not hear anything back from Ankara. Maybe the officers evaluate the reports but [laughs] we receive no response as to the next action. The files gather dust on the shelves unless MoNE orders us to look them up and find out if there are any interesting ideas. (Source code: Uq8)

The statements of Deniz, Ahmet and Emre, educational administrators, provide further insights into the fate of these reports. Deniz commented that the reports were read partly or fully, but because they could not take any action in relation to the concerns expressed in the reports, there would be no response to the teachers. Ahmet also said that unless there was anything that required feedback within the report, they would not give feedback to individual focus teacher groups or schools. Finally, Emre hinted that the way district and provincial directorate dealt with these reports might vary from one directorate to other: 'In this district directorate, we try to read meeting reports as much as we can' (Source code Eq1). These findings raise many questions about the centralised structure of MoNE, the roles and responsibilities of provincial and district directorates and their spaces for autonomous action.

5.4 Chapter conclusion

The findings of the study have been presented under two main sections. In Section 5.2, survey findings have been presented including statistical and free-text responses obtained from the respondents.

Section 5.3 has presented the findings from documents, observation and interview study. When appropriate and necessary, data from the survey questionnaire were incorporated into the Section 5.3. Brief background characteristics of the English teachers, head teachers and educational administrators were given at the beginning of the chapter and the school contexts of those who participated in the observation study were described. The interview study facilitated access to the participants' perceptions, meanings and definitions of teacher autonomy by asking them directly or indirectly to elaborate on their use of teacher autonomy. The main themes identified in the data included: teaching materials and methods (textbooks, supplementary materials, use of technology, and teaching methods), assessment (in-class assessment and TEOG), school structure (school committees, involvement in decisions relating to timetabling and year groups, and teacher collaboration), and overall structure of MoNE (professional development and teacher motivation, teacher involvement in curriculum development/evaluation, and dialogue between MoNE and teachers). In Chapter 6, these will be discussed in the light of the literature and the critical realist approach adopted in this study.

6 Discussion of findings and conclusion

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the findings of this PhD research study. This chapter draws together these findings and discusses them in the light of the literature explored in Chapter 3 and the critical realist approach adopted in this study. This approach was used to examine the understandings and exercise of teacher autonomy through an interplay between agency and structure; and the mechanisms that shape them. This chapter is organised around the research questions that were posed in Chapter 3. Section 6.2 focuses on the discussion of the first research question: How is teacher autonomy understood in Turkish state lower secondary schools with reference to English language teaching? Section 6.3 answers the second research question: How is teacher autonomy exercised in these schools in relation to teaching and assessment, school management, professional development and curriculum development? The third research question is answered in Section 6.4: What are the mechanisms that shape the understandings and the exercise of teacher autonomy within this context? Section 6.5 clarifies the contributions, which the study makes to our knowledge of teacher autonomy in Turkey. Section 6.6 discusses its limitations and makes recommendations for further research. The final section (Section 6.7) presents a conclusion to the thesis.

6.2 Discussion of research question one

How is teacher autonomy understood in Turkish state lower secondary schools with reference to English Language Teaching?

An initial objective of this PhD research study was to explore understandings of teacher autonomy in the context of Turkish state lower secondary schools with a focus on English language teaching. By means of documentary analysis, it was possible to gain a good understanding of the Turkish education system and the place of teacher autonomy within the system. The survey questionnaire, observations and the interviews conducted with Turkish teachers of English, head teachers and educational administrators provided evidence to uncover the understanding of teacher autonomy of those involved at different levels of the education system. In the early stages of data collection it was anticipated that this was a question with no simple answer.

The analysis of documents in Chapter 5 demonstrated that the term ‘teacher autonomy’ was not present in any of the educational policy documents despite the frequent use of a related term ‘learner autonomy’ which was mentioned in Chapter 2 when dealing with the curricular and structural changes that took place in the Turkish education system between 2000 and 2010. Nevertheless, there was evidence in the data from this study that the Turkish education system was familiar with the idea of teacher autonomy. The idea manifested itself in a variety of ways in the policy documents. Teachers, for example, were encouraged to take initiatives, exercise discretion in order to meet students’ needs, work collaboratively within schools, participate in decision-making processes, and take responsibility for their

own professional development. As a result of the recent changes introduced to the education system, teachers were also given more of a voice in choosing their professional developmental needs, participating in textbook selection panels, evaluating their school head teachers once a year or in taking active roles in school related issues as reported in Table 7. All this evidence indicated that teacher autonomy was a meaningful and important concept in the Turkish education system.

The interview data from this study revealed that definitions of teacher autonomy varied greatly. They included terms such as 'control', 'discretion', 'capability', 'right to make decisions', 'self-efficacy', and 'negotiation'. The analysis of interview data demonstrated a high degree of commonality in the views of the participants about which forms of autonomy they were for, and which they were against. This gave detailed insights into the interview participants' actual understanding of teacher autonomy and its nature. Almost all the participants regardless of their positions within the education system were in support of teacher autonomy, but acknowledged the limits of the education system. For many, going beyond the limits meant exercising full freedom and independence and this was deemed to be a threat to the unity of the Turkish education system.

The participants' view of autonomy within the limits of the education system suggests that it is possible for teachers to act autonomously without having control over the basic direction of their professional lives (Tietjen-Meyers, 1987). Teachers can still act autonomously and comply with educational policies, regulations and guidelines. Working within the boundaries set for them in the education system does not mean that a teacher is not acting autonomously (Davis, 1996). As discussed previously in Chapter 3, while teachers' work contexts can have a downward causal

effect on their behaviour, this does not mean that their behaviour is entirely determined by the school organisation or their role specification, because the causal power of the individual as well as of other factors co-determine teacher behaviour (Elder-Vass, 2010). Teachers do not simply react to the enablements and constraints of social structures like 'billiard balls' that are hit (Astbury and Leeuw's, 2010, p.370).

Furthermore, the emphasis in the interview data on the limits of the education system indicated that the participants were aware of the factors that may influence the exercise of autonomy by teachers. Awareness of the social context and its limits is important for the exercise of autonomy (Deci and Ryan, 2012). When teachers have a good understanding of their social environments and what is happening around them, they will be able to avoid or resist the potential negative effects of any factors that constrain their autonomy in their work contexts (Deci and Ryan, 2012). Overall, the data signifies that teacher autonomy was a meaningful concept within the education system and the participants agree that the exercise of autonomy by teachers is necessary on condition that teachers do not go beyond the limits of the education system.

6.3 Discussion of research question two

How is teacher autonomy exercised in Turkish state lower-secondary schools in relation to teaching and assessment, school management, professional development and curriculum development?

It was established in Chapter 3 (Section 3.3) that teachers' roles are not restricted to the classroom, because teachers undertake a number of tasks in their work contexts. Hence, an examination of the exercise of autonomy by teachers must involve all the areas in which they actively participate in schools. The most appropriate framework found in the relevant literature was that of Friedman (1999) who subdivided teachers' areas of functioning into four: teaching and assessment, school management [school mode of operation in the original], professional development and curriculum development. The analysis of data from this study indicated that teacher autonomy occurred as the outcome of an interplay between social structures and teacher agency. This was, however, more complicated than the model Bhaskar illustrates in his Transformational Model for structure and agency. For example, if a social structure provided the conditions that enabled a teacher to achieve agency, how teachers reacted to this depends on several other structures. Furthermore, the data from this PhD study found that teacher agency when making decisions in the classroom was generally achieved in the light of – or constrained by – the teachers' past experience, awareness of societal possibilities and constraints and capacity for practical evaluative skills. The rest of this section responds to the research question and discusses this complex interplay between agency and structure in relation to teaching and assessment, school management, professional development and curriculum development respectively.

Teaching and assessment

The analysis of survey data in Chapter 5 showed that the teachers in my sample generally enjoyed autonomy in the area of teaching and assessment with some exceptions such as selecting textbooks. A split in opinion was apparent in the data

in issues, for example, relating to assessment activities or classroom space. In addition to what was asked in the survey questionnaire, the interview and observation data showed that:

- 🌈 Through their recognition of students' needs and the use of their problem solving skills, the teachers in my sample were able to make adjustments to their lessons and design assessment activities appropriately, but this also depended on the interplay between human actors and other causal structures;
- 🌈 Teacher autonomy takes different forms depending on the context of study.

First, the significance of meeting the needs of students is emphasised both in the 2023 Vision Strategy and in the English teaching curriculum. This means that, in principle, the education system allows teachers to use discretion in the classroom to design their lessons around the local context in which they are working and individual student needs. Similarly, for almost all the teachers in my interview sample, it was very important to respond to the needs of their students. This was usually reflected in their responses to the question of what a good English teacher was. Mehmet, for example, talked about how his students' psychological or emotional conditions on the day when they were being taught guided him in respect to which part of the curriculum he needed to focus on. Gizem also mentioned that the students had different needs in the local context where she was working, and her priority was to broaden their horizons. These teachers were able to tailor their lessons to the needs of their students, preparing relevant assessment activities and taking action for the benefit of students, evaluating the emerging demands,

dilemmas and ambiguities of the classroom. The data in this study, for instance, suggested that, due to persistent technical problems with the whiteboards or the Internet, the teachers in my observation sample had to constantly make alternative decisions. They did this by the use of practical evaluative skills and reflexive decision-making, and by entering into negotiations with the head teachers.

This finding is supported by Webb's (2002) case study, which was undertaken in a US public elementary school. Webb found that his participants recognised their students' needs and adjusted curricular and assessment activities in a way that they believed would benefit students. The present PhD study goes further than this and shows that teacher autonomy does not simply emerge through teachers' recognition of the needs of the students and adjustment they make, but as a result of an interaction between constraining/enabling social structures and their agency. This is discussed further in the rest of this section.

The 2023 Vision Strategy and the curriculum programme, for instance, provide the conditions for teachers, which enable them to take the needs of students into consideration and this corresponds with the views of teachers about what a good English teacher is. However, the data suggests, TEOG, the curriculum and the directives sent to the schools asking teachers to teach to the curriculum and use centrally prescribed textbooks and avoid supplementary materials appear to constrain teachers in making adjustments to the lessons and responding to the needs of their students. This also explains why a majority of survey respondents stated that they could not find a way and time to teach the things they liked in addition to those in the curriculum, or select topics and skills to be taught from the centralised English teaching curriculum.

Eggleston (1979) reminds us that classrooms are the settings where freedom and constraints coexist and teachers through their enactment of agency can find ways of improving or changing situations for themselves. This was also emphasised by Lamb (2000) who argued: 'Individual schools, **teachers** or students can change the learning environment' by negotiating their spaces and finding their voice within the constraints that exist in the education system (p. 121). In an example presented in Chapter 5, for instance, we saw how one of the teacher interviewees allowed her Year 8 students who were studying towards TEOG to be exempt from project homework (see Quote: AnonymisedQ5). In the case of Sema, as well, it was found that through the help of the head teacher, she was able to get new teaching materials for her students, who had found the textbook content too difficult (p. 210).

Moreover, the analysis of interview and observation data provided evidence that teacher autonomy takes different forms, depending on the context of study. Within the Turkish state lower secondary school context, distorted forms of teacher autonomy were found, where some of the teachers exercised autonomy, although they did not have the legal right to do so. Falsification of in-class assessment results in Year 8 is an example of this. The two most frequently mentioned reasons for this practice by the teachers who participated in the interview and observation study were (a) providing better conditions to the students who, they believed, did not have access to the same opportunities as those elsewhere in the country and (b) that teachers know students and local contexts better than MoNE, hence they should be able to assess the students. By falsifying the exam results, these teachers aimed to boost their students' end of school year mark, which is calculated by combining 70% of TEOG and 30% of in-class assessment results. As Raya and Vieira (2015) suggest, what these teachers are doing is questioning reality as they believe it to be,

and exploring possibilities that make it closer to what they believe it should be. In isolation, this may have suggested that this distorted version of autonomy is a by-product of individual teacher behaviour, beliefs and values. However, the data shows that it is derived from the nexus between teacher actors, including their beliefs and values, and parents and head teachers who pressure teachers to guarantee success in TEOG.

School management

The survey showed that respondents' views in relation to school management were generally negative, but they stated that they felt great sense of involvement and ownership in what is happening in the school. The analysis of interview and observation data, on the other hand, showed that teachers were able to get involved in the decisions relating to their weekly timetabling and, in some cases, relating to the choice of year groups and classes. Previous research tended to conclude that teachers in state lower secondary schools in Turkey do not take active roles in decisions and head teachers are the main decision-makers (Gülcan, 2011).

Although this PhD study also found that head teachers had a negative causal effect on teacher behaviour, this did not fully determine the outcome. According to the data from this study, the head teachers, the relationship with other teachers and the needs and willingness of the teachers were the main determinants of the extent to which teachers were involved in decisions in the area of school management. As described in the previous chapter, for example, Mehmet needed to have a day off on Fridays in order to take care of his parents. To guarantee this, he needed to enter into negotiations with the head teacher or the deputy head teachers. In the case of Gizem, this was only possible after an argument with the head teacher.

The analysis of documents and interviews with the head teachers and educational administrators provided supplementary insights into teacher involvement in school management. According to the participants, teacher involvement in school management was generally achieved through teacher participation in the Board of Teachers, school teams and committees, and by carrying out teacher guard duty. When defining autonomy as the essential condition of self-government, Feinberg (1989) suggests that a person may have the capacity for, and the right to self-government, but this is not sufficient. A person also needs an opportunity to exercise this right and capacity (Feinberg, 1989). However, the findings of this study show that the existence of opportunities, together with individual capacity, does not necessarily result in the emergence of autonomy.

Opportunity appears to be an emergent condition, which takes its shape depending on the particular school context and the individual working relationships within it. This suggests that school culture can negate MoNE's attempts to implement changes in schools and to engage teachers in school-related issues. The 2023 Vision Strategy introduced in Chapter 1, for instance, constitutes a significant opportunity for teachers to get engaged in school management because it facilitates a participatory management style in schools, where teachers can gain active roles. A desire on the part of MoNE to foster engagement from the teachers in relation to school management was also apparent in the analysis of other documents. Some of the school committees described in Chapter 5 include the 'school management and development team', 'the school and family scrutiny committee', 'the total quality management and improvement committee.' The head teachers and educational administrators also had favourable views about teacher involvement in school management and argued that this was important for developing ownership towards

the school in teachers. They were, however, doubtful that teachers were willing to take active roles in school-wide issues.

Despite mention of current opportunities and affirmative statements by the head teachers and educational administrators in my sample, the teacher interviewees were very sceptical about their involvement in school management. They perceived that their involvement in decisions related to school management was minimal.

There was general agreement among the teachers who participated in the interviews about the improper functioning of school teams and committees. Overall, these exemplify the complex nature of schools described in Chapter 3 and that regardless of the arrangements MoNE makes, involvement of teachers in school management vary from one school to another.

Professional development

The data from the survey and the teacher interviews varied widely, thus making it difficult to distinguish exactly how teacher autonomy was exercised in relation to professional development. For instance, a majority of survey respondents stated that they were able to identify professional development targets, engage in action research, help less experienced teachers, and take risks. However, it was not possible for the survey respondents to inform MoNE about their professional development needs so as to influence the appointment of the instructors of the in-service training seminars. Overall, there was little evidence in the analysis of interview and observation data that teachers exercised autonomy in relation to their professional development. The responses of the teacher interviewees were dominated by complaints about the scarcity and poor quality of the development

programmes organized by MoNE. They were critical of these training programmes, but had a passive and acquiescent attitude to taking action to change or attempt to change the current situation. As a result of their experiences over time, these teachers did not believe their feedback would be taken into consideration.

In relation to MoNE-organised training, it seems at first sight that a lack of teacher agency impeded the emergence of autonomy in relation to professional development. The analysis of interviews with the educational administrators suggested the same. They believed teachers were reluctant to get involved in, or create spaces for autonomy in professional development. Hakan, for instance, mentioned that he was willing to organise specialised local training seminars at teachers' request. Ediz talked about online training available to teachers. The analysis of interviews with teachers, however, showed that these teachers were not aware that they could contact the provincial and/or district national directorates to communicate their training needs. Similarly, no indication of awareness of online courses was found in the interview data.

It was discussed in Section 6.1 that awareness of the social context and its limits is important for the exercise of autonomy (Deci and Ryan, 2012). However, as demonstrated in the data, awareness of the constraints on one's exercise of autonomy is not sufficient. It is essential to have an awareness about the opportunities for teacher autonomy that exist in the education system and to be able to create spaces for the exercise of autonomy, whether individually or collectively. Each person has some capacities and teachers are not powerless, but it is necessary for the teacher to see that they have power and that they can play a role in improving the present conditions (Bhaskar, 1998a). However the achievement of

agentic capacities depends on the interaction of these capacities and available structures (Danermark, 2012). As the data from this study shows, a lack of communication between MoNE and teachers about the opportunities available for professional development and the lack of intention to take action on the part of teachers appear to co-determine the lack of autonomy in the area of professional development.

The teachers' lack of intention also depended on other factors and this confirms the findings of Bayar (2013) who suggested that family commitments and time may also influence teacher participation in professional development activities. This PhD study extends Bayar's findings by its consideration of teacher agency – if achieved – as capable of resisting these constraining factors. Furthermore, in contrast to what Bayar (2013) argued, this study found evidence that head teachers may play a role in enabling or inhibiting teachers' exercise of autonomy in relation to professional development, as the analysis of survey free text responses revealed. For instance, one of the survey respondents talked specifically about how she was excluded from the school's Comenius project by the head teacher.

Curriculum development

It is stated in the generic teacher competencies published by MoNE (2008) that monitoring, evaluating and developing the curriculum programme is one of the competencies teachers possess. Teachers are expected to make suggestions on the curriculum development process in the light of problems experienced during implementation. The analysis of data in Chapter 5 showed that this was generally carried out through teacher focus group meetings and the reports submitted to the

relevant district directorates of MoNE. This shows that, despite its centralised structure, MoNE values teacher feedback in curriculum development and involves teachers in this process, albeit rather obliquely. However, the data from the interviews undertaken with the teachers tells a different story.

For the teachers who participated in the interviews, the focus group meetings were 'so-called meetings'. Derya's comments were particularly noteworthy, as she said that the purpose of these meetings for her and her colleagues was a get-together. Despite the presence of a structure, which enables teachers to exercise agency in the area of curriculum development and develop autonomy, teachers' attitudes towards focus group meetings could have been explained by their lack of agency. However, the analysis of data presented in Chapter 5 showed that although MoNE gives teachers the opportunity to get engaged in curriculum development through focus group meetings, the teachers in my interview sample were convinced that their views were not taken into account and all agreed that their reports were not read by MoNE officials, since no feedback was provided to them. As a result, they were convinced that their views and expertise did not matter to MoNE.

The comments of the educational administrators about teacher focus group meeting reports, however, showed that despite its centralised structure, institutional culture in MoNE directorates may vary widely. This suggests that, as well as MoNE being a large centralised organisation, its parts have causal powers in their own right. Elder-Vass (2010) explains this by attributing a laminated view to social structure and arguing that we sometimes need to treat a structure quite explicitly as a stratified ensemble. In the case of teacher involvement in curriculum development, while MoNE aims to engage teachers in the evaluation of the curriculum through teacher

focus group meetings, the strategies adopted by provincial and district directorates for dealing with these meeting reports may act as an obstacle to genuine engagement and constrain teachers' causal powers to exercise autonomy.

In the process of curriculum development, as well as other stakeholders, teachers can play an important role. Through their knowledge about the local student needs and familiarity with the way schools operate, they can provide feedback about whether and how the curriculum works in their contexts and what kind of adjustments need to be made (Cincioğlu, 2014). Carl (2009) suggests that teachers must be part of the curriculum renewal process to maximise success. This PhD study found that teachers were willing to get involved in this process if further opportunities were provided. This finding confirms the findings of previous research undertaken in the Turkish context (e.g. Karakus and Us, 2016). Furthermore, the data from this PhD study suggests that teachers' involvement in the processes of curriculum development or evaluation would make the teachers feel valued within the education system. This has positive implications for improving the way provincial and district directorates deal with focus group meeting reports in order that focus group meetings become meaningful. This also has implications for curriculum reforms that MoNE might introduce in future.

Overall, the data in this study provided useful insights to answer the second research question. In the area of teaching and assessment, teachers in my sample generally enjoyed autonomy. They sometimes tailored their lessons to the needs of their students and prepared assessment activities in line with student levels and took action for the benefit of students. They achieved this by evaluating the emerging demands, dilemmas and ambiguities of the classroom. Distorted forms of

autonomy were found in the data. In the area of school management, the data showed that teachers were able to become engaged in the decisions relating to their weekly timetabling and their choice of year groups and classes. This suggested that school culture might negate MoNE's attempts to implement changes in schools and to engage teachers in school-related issues. In relation to professional development, a variance was found in the data obtained from the survey and teacher interview study. This made it difficult to distinguish exactly how autonomy was exercised by teachers in the area of professional development. While nearly half of the survey respondents said that they played an active role in their professional development, there was little evidence in the analysis of interview and observation data that teachers exercised autonomy in relation to their professional development. Finally, in the area of curriculum development, the data in this study suggested that focus group meetings provided the opportunity for teachers to become involved in curriculum evaluation. However, MoNE's middle management at province and district level adopts differing approaches to the way they deal with the meeting reports produced in these meetings. This seems to constrain teachers' causal powers to develop autonomy.

6.4 Discussion of research question three

What are the mechanisms that shape the understandings and exercise of teacher autonomy in the context of Turkish state lower secondary schools with reference to English Language Teaching?

Adopting a critical realist view, this PhD project sees teacher autonomy as emerging through an interaction between agency and social structures and each of these

possesses its own properties and causal powers. As established in Chapter 4 (Section 4.2), critical realism suggests that reality has a deep dimension (Danermark et al, 2002). This is why it cannot be reduced to the observation of phenomena at the empirical level. If we want to acquire usable knowledge and go beyond the causal powers of agency and structure and the interplay between them, we must explore the mechanisms that generate these powers. The third aim of this study was to explore these mechanisms. The following mechanisms are identified in this study: geopolitical context, compliance and accountability, trust, school culture, and teacher collegiality mechanisms.

6.4.1 Geopolitical context

Geopolitical context emerges as a significant mechanism in the data that shapes the understanding and exercise of autonomy by teachers in many ways. First, unity within the geopolitical context of Turkey stands as an important notion since the start of the War of Independence in 1919. An impressive display of unity and solidarity from Turkish people under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk brought the victory to Turkey in 1923. According to the Law on Unification of Education, national unity is one of the main aims of the Turkish education system. The centralised and bureaucratic structure of the education system aims to maintain unity in education. This study found that the principle of unity plays a role in shaping how the participants understand teacher autonomy in the Turkish context. A particular attitude was displayed by some of the participants, regardless of their positions, which meant that they understood teacher autonomy as a threat to educational unity and a potential source of chaos in schools. It was apparent in the views of the participants that the inability to unite would result in disorder and

confusion. Enabling autonomy, however, meets a basic human need (Ryan and Deci, 2006). This then may assure social harmony, a well-functioning civil society and high social capital (Sahlberg, 2007), which are effective means of fostering unity.

Second, the Turkish education system has embarked on many wide-ranging changes as was established in Chapter 2. A particular desire on the part of MoNE to generate engagement from teachers in issues relating to teaching and assessment, school management, professional development and curriculum development is apparent. Most of these changes were influenced by Turkey's European accession process that began in 2001. Since then, MoNE's policy has been revised and polished with a particular emphasis on its democratic characteristics and the importance of creating a democratic culture in schools. Following the introduction of the government's 2023 Vision Strategy, more emphasis has been placed on a participatory approach to education. The data in this study suggests that in many cases these changes are promising in terms of teacher autonomy, but there appear to be problems stemming from a clash of messages about the opportunities available to teachers. Teachers' roles have been extended, and more spaces seem to have become available for teachers to become involved in many areas of the education system. For instance, the education system now allows teachers to evaluate head teachers and their management styles once a year (Chapter 5, Table 7), but the input is obtained only from one of the most experienced teachers within a school. The weakness of this arrangement might be that this may simply be a long-term acquaintance or even a crony of the head teacher. Similarly, teachers are asked to take part in the textbook selection panels (Chapter 5, Section 5.3.4.1), but

only a very limited number of teachers are involved in the process and their role is limited to reviewing and choosing from a list predetermined by MoNE.

Nevertheless, the recent initiatives are providing some opportunities for the exercise of autonomy by teachers outside the classroom and the 2023 Vision Strategy suggests that the focus will be widened in the near future. However, the findings of this study raise some questions about the readiness and willingness of teachers and head teachers to welcome these new roles and embrace the change and this has implications for in-service and teacher education programmes in the country.

The influence of the geopolitical context on teacher autonomy is not limited to the initiatives for change in the country. The second point concerns the political conflicts that inhibit teachers' use of resources in the classroom. The analysis of documents and interviews showed that the clash between President Erdoğan and Fethullah Gülen influences classrooms in a way that restricts teachers' use of discretion and autonomy in relation to the use of supplementary resources in the classrooms, other than those provided by MoNE. This finding is a clear example of how the exercise of autonomy can be shaped and stunted by political quarrels and the conflicts of those in power.

The literature in the Turkish context tends to focus on how neoliberal policies influence the exercise of teacher autonomy with particular reference to the relationship between the politicisation of education and autonomy. An example of this is Ertürk's (2012) article, which incorporates her interviews undertaken with five lower-secondary school teachers. In her article, Ertürk discusses how the intensification of neoliberal reforms in the era of AKP, the ruling party, has limited teachers' autonomy. The data in this PhD work, however, shows evidence of the

direct influence of politicians and political conflicts on the classroom. As noted in Chapter 5, the notices sent to the provincial governors in 2015, numbered 1761900-200-E.10452928 and 76198665/806.99/8494194 (MoNE, 2016f), demonstrated that the restrictions over teachers' use of supplementary materials in the classroom were politically oriented.

For whatever reason, a climate of fear which is an outcome of this political tension in the Turkish education also shaped teachers' choice of which online resources to use in the classroom. When using interactive whiteboards in the classroom, the teachers in my sample preferred to limit their choices to Morpha Campus, which was in line with the curriculum programme and the textbooks and supported by MoNE. Interviews with the teachers suggested that this was a deliberate decision made by these teachers. Teacher statements such as 'Why would I take risks anyway?' suggest that teachers were being cautious in an attempt to avoid any conflict that would arise as a result of their own independent choice of online sources.

6.4.2 Compliance & accountability

Compliance and accountability are separate concepts, but as the data in this study also revealed, particularly in the case of Year 8, they are closely linked to each other. I will begin with compliance measures valid for all year groups in lower-secondary schools that seem to shape the way teacher autonomy is understood and exercised and then will discuss these in relation to Year 8. First, this study, as discussed in Chapter 3, adopts the view that the various education systems and schools contain within them diverse and contradictory strategies of control (Ball, 1987) and that teacher autonomy can be exercised, even within heavily centralised

educational systems, as its practice depends not only on the structural constraints or enablements available, but also on powers of agency. The data from this study showed that the strategies adopted for maintaining compliance in the context of Turkish state lower secondary schools (regardless of year groups the teachers in my sample worked with) were in some cases so deeply embedded in the system that these teachers enacted a negative form of agency.

Two of the systems for compliance identified in this study are: school inspectors and end of term reports. The government invests money in free textbooks and wants to ensure that these are used in schools. Data collected for this study suggests that teachers' use of textbooks is monitored by school inspectors, and their compliance with the curriculum through the end of term reports submitted to MoNE. The teachers in my interview sample said that they stated in their reports that they had successfully completed teaching the curriculum, even though they had not. Gitlin (2001) argues that compliance is a strategy used by teachers in order to cope with intense working conditions. The teachers in Gitlin's sample used the prescribed curriculum and textbooks for the purpose of curtailing the intensity of work. When discussing the relationship between bureaucracy and teachers, La Ganza (2008) argues that teachers can subvert compliance by using their needs and power. The teachers in my sample, however, seemed to enact a negative form of agency in order to avoid conflict with MoNE (e.g. concealing the information in their end of term reports). So the main motive was not the intensification of work, as it was in Gitlin's study. Derya's words suggested that this was motivated by what they had learnt in the past within the Turkish education system. Derya, for instance, had learnt that if she did not conform, head teachers would interfere to avoid any potential conflict with MoNE. The analysis of interviews with the educational

administrators suggested that teachers could actually have revised the curriculum if MoNE had been aware that the curriculum could not be completed on time. This highlights the transformative power of agency in Bhaskar's model. However, the teachers in my sample through the enactment of negative agency –using compliance as a strategy to avoid conflict with MoNE – contributed to making their own work more repetitive and alienating. Gitlin (2001) argues that this eventually has consequences for teachers' professionalism and the de-skilling of teachers.

The data in relation to Year 8 is a clear example of how compliance and accountability together shape the understanding and exercise of autonomy. The analysis of all interviews demonstrated that the content of TEOG was predictable if the textbooks were followed page by page. So the teachers in my sample preferred to teach to the textbooks, in order to guarantee success in TEOG. The analysis of documents showed that the directives sent to the schools by MoNE contained reminders to head teachers and teachers that compliance was important and necessary for TEOG success. These directives seemed to have played a role in shaping how autonomy is exercised by teachers. It was found in this study that accountability was a major source of concern for the head teachers and English teachers. What Bushnell (2003) argued was also the case in the Turkish context:

Standardized tests serve to monitor not only teachers' performances but also those of their principals. School administrators' [head teachers] positions can be adversely or positively affected by their schools' standardized test performance (p.262).

The analysis of data presented in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3.4.2) suggested that head teachers curtail or withdraw freedom in the classroom depending on TEOG results.

If students had low success rates in TEOG, then they, as head teachers, were likely to intervene in the classrooms and ask teachers to change their teaching styles and methods, advising them to pay more attention to the textbooks and to stick to the curriculum. As long as success was guaranteed, the head teachers were ready to grant more spaces for autonomy to the teachers. The analysis of interviews with the head teachers and educational administrators suggested that, although school rankings were not shared with the public, MoNE monitored closely how well schools did in TEOG and shared this with the school head teachers. Thus, TEOG – a standardised test – served to monitor the performances of the head teachers and those working under their management (Bushnell, 2003).

6.4.3 Trust

The control strategies discussed above play a role in shaping the understanding and exercise of teacher autonomy. Although these could be seen as part of MoNE's desire to ensure compliance and accountability in schools, or as a necessary feature of a centralised education system, Lopes *et al.*'s work (2014) to which reference was made in Chapter 3, offers a different perspective on the existence of a high level of monitoring and control in the education system. Lopes *et al.* claims that high levels of control could be related to low levels of trust. Trust is a strong underlying structure which explains some of the events observed in the data, such as the attitudes of some of the educational administrators towards English teachers, the use of the 147-telephone line by parents, insistence on the use of textbooks, the highly centralised curriculum, or teacher attitudes towards the school committees and focus group meetings.

First, there seems to be an issue of distrust within and around the education system, in relation to English language teaching. The educational administrators, for instance, made severe criticisms of Turkish teachers of English, as quoted in this thesis (Chapter 5, Section, 5.3.4.4). Almost all the educational administrators questioned the English teachers' competence and quite explicitly expressed lack of trust in their expertise or their willingness to develop themselves professionally. Trust issues were also apparent in the analysis of survey and teacher interview data. The findings indicated that some of the teachers had little trust in MoNE. They did not believe MoNE valued them. They also did not believe that MoNE was aware of local students' needs and levels and the reports of their views from the focus group meetings were not even read by MoNE. Some of the survey respondents thought MoNE did not take their opinions and experiences into account and even if they had the opportunity to make their voice heard, this would not make any difference. The lack of trust these teachers have in MoNE appears to affect their agential powers in a negative way, thus eliminating the spaces they could create for autonomy. Lundström (2015) argues that distrust has further consequences for teachers such as a loss in their commitment to the profession, job motivation, morale and eventually autonomy.

So far, the discussion of trust has been around MoNE and teachers. The analysis of interview data and the free text responses to the survey demonstrated that trust was also a key concept in the relationship between teachers and parents and this influenced the exercise of autonomy by some of the teachers in the classroom (e.g. Derya). When teachers felt they were trusted, they were able to exercise autonomy in the classroom. In the cases of Sema and Özlem, however, the opposite occurred and parents interfered with their use of discretion, expertise and initiatives in the

classroom. Similarly, the 147- telephone line seemed to have contributed to the culture of distrust. As the interview and documentary data suggested, parents used the 147-telephone line to complain about teachers. In order to avoid receiving complaints through this line, Özlem stated that when maintaining discipline in the classroom she now needed to be extra careful and had to allow parents to interfere with her decisions about her own teaching practices in school. Overall, the data suggests that trust is a critical factor that plays a role in shaping the understanding and the exercise of autonomy by Turkish teachers of English in the context of state lower secondary schools.

Admittedly, building a culture of trust is important in an education system and that eventually contributes to improving the quality of education (Sahlberg, 2007). I acknowledge that this can be a slow process and requires particular commitment from MoNE. The initial step seems to be the realisation of the erosion of trust towards teachers and from teachers towards MoNE and an acknowledgement of trust as a valuable social capital. Sahlberg (2007), whose work I made reference to in the literature review chapter, when defining the culture of trust, emphasised the importance of a recognition on the part of authorities and political leaders that teachers together with head teachers, parents and their local communities know how to provide the best possible education for students. This may have implications for the decentralisation of education, an on-going debate in Turkey as mentioned in Chapter 2. Whether trust is exclusive to a decentralised education system is a question that is beyond the scope of this thesis, but the data in this study indicates that within the current structure of the Turkish education system, there seems to be a scope to build a culture of trust (e.g. providing feedback to the teachers about their meeting reports). Creating an autonomy-supportive environment in which teachers

can find ways to satisfy their need for competence and relatedness, as Deci and Ryan argue (2014), can be the first path towards a culture of trust. This makes trust both a mechanism that shapes the exercise of autonomy and a consequence of an autonomy-supportive culture.

6.4.4 School culture

Earlier in this thesis, it has been acknowledged that teachers do not work in isolation or in a vacuum (Chapter 3, Section 3.3), but in schools with specific cultures and structures (Ball, 1987; Anderson, 1995; Lindblad, 1997). The data in this study suggested that despite the centralised structure of the Turkish education system, school culture varied greatly from one school to another. The variation around mission and emphasis in the schools in which I undertook my observation study exemplifies this. The interview data suggested that school culture had a particular role in the extent to which the teachers in my sample were involved in decision-making. The head teachers' role in this was apparent in the data.

Reference has been made earlier in the thesis (Chapter 3, Section 3.3) to Collins's (1975) three types of organization: hierarchical, membership-controlled and professional communities and I have referred to Ball (1987) who argues that schools contain within them all three types of organization. The interviews, particularly with the head teachers and the educational administrators suggested that one of these styles may be more dominant than the others in a school context, thus playing a role in the creation of school culture. Based on the analysis of data in this study, I acknowledge that head teachers use a number of leadership styles or strategies depending on the issue they are dealing with and the data suggests that their

personal interests determine the type of leadership they use in relation to that particular issue.

Examples of how this happens were found both in the survey and teacher interview data. Gizem, for instance, claimed that her head teacher used discretion and involved her colleagues in timetabling, but she was denied involvement in her timetable until she confronted him. The interview with Gizem showed that this was due to a conflict over her head teachers' political and religious interests. In another case, as reported in the analysis of teacher interview data in Chapter 5, Sema's hope to use the spare classroom in the school specifically for English teaching purposes was declined by the head teacher, who later turned that classroom into a prayer room (a masjid) for students and teachers. Sema's head teacher was among the head teachers I interviewed, Serkan, who valued teacher involvement in decisions. In another example, we saw how one of the survey respondents, who was appointed to a new school, was excluded from the school's Comenius projects, despite her extensive experience in project-making. According to the respondent, this was due to the head teacher's established relationships with the existing staff. So, the existing social structures constrained this teacher's autonomy, while the same structures were enabling for others (Archer, 1995).

Likewise, Güçlü *et al.*'s (2015) study of the effects of leadership styles, decision-making strategies and personality in lower secondary schools in Ankara indicated that teachers did not take active roles in decisions related to school-wide issues, and that head teachers and the deputy head teachers were the main decision-makers in schools. However, each school is a complex political world and many problems can be solved through bargaining and negotiation (Hargreaves, 1995).

Similarly, teacher autonomy was available to the teachers in my sample through negotiation with the head teacher in relation to the issues, which were of direct interest to them. Deci and Ryan (2014) report that employees with autonomy-supportive managers experience more job satisfaction because their need for autonomy as well as competence and relatedness are met. When managers are controlling, this reduces wellness and performance in the workplace. Overall, involvement in decision-making can have positive consequences for education, however this may not always be the case or a straightforward process. It would be naive to think that head teachers create school culture single-handedly, particularly when we see schools as large social organisations. In the next section, a further elaboration of this issue will take place.

6.4.5 Teacher collegiality mechanisms

Formal opportunities available to teachers for collaborative action and autonomy were identified in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3.4.3). These included: the counsellor teacher group; the board of teachers; teacher focus groups; the board of subject teachers; the committees for assessing student behaviour; for social activities; for ceremonies and celebrations; and the advice and guidance board. A wide range of committees implemented across schools was also described in Section 5.3.4.3. These included the school management and development team, the school and family scrutiny committee, the total quality management committee, and a committee for purchasing items in schools. While these collaborative working arrangements may appear to engage teachers in genuine collegiality, the findings of this study showed that instead they were simply experienced by the teachers in my interview sample as formalities of the bureaucratic education system and mandates

to work together as a result of administrative regulation, similar to what Hargreaves (1992) and Kelchtermans (2006) suggest.

Providing structures in the form of regulations and legislations, which are necessary for teacher collaboration is important. However, Kelchtermans (2006) suggests that this is not sufficient on its own to ensure that collaboration takes place, because the cultural and structural working conditions in schools are likely to determine and mediate teacher collaboration and how collegiality is experienced and valued by its members. Additionally, teachers vary in their strengths and weakness and each have varying competencies and interests (Sa'ad and Hamm, 1977). Therefore, head teachers play an important role in maximising the advantages of teacher autonomy and reducing its disadvantages. As Sa'ad and Hamm (1977) suggest, they can achieve this by encouraging self-reflection and collective decision-making. This, however, is not sufficient because it is important for schools and teachers to embrace the collegiality opportunities and see that these can contribute to their professional growth and school effectiveness. This has implications for in-service teacher training programmes. Training programmes should be organised in which teachers and head teachers are encouraged to engage in genuine collaboration and learn to create a collaborative culture in schools.

Moreover, the study findings indicate that the working patterns of the teachers regulated by MoNE generate a work environment in schools that appears to be unpropitious for teacher autonomy. The analysis of interview data from this study showed that the teachers in my sample were present in schools only when they had classes to teach. In some cases this was for only two or three hours a day. They would come to school on the days or at the time of day when they were teaching,

and leave as soon as their classes were finished. Teachers were only required to stay in school all day when they had their watch and guard duty. The analysis of data in Chapter 5 suggested that this situation might have hindered collaboration among teachers and in some cases had a negative impact on the development of collegial work relations. Without social relationships, however, the development of autonomy is not possible (Tietjen-Meyers, 1987).

6.5 Contributions of this study

This section highlights the contributions this study makes to the research on teacher autonomy both in the field of applied linguistics for language learning and teaching and in general teacher autonomy literature. It also discusses implications of this study for the discussion of ELT in Turkey.

A new perspective on teacher autonomy

Previous research on teacher autonomy in the field of applied linguistics for language learning and teaching offered a number of insights about its meanings (e.g. McGrath, 2000; Huang, 2005; Benson and Huang, 2008). It focused on the interplay between learner and teacher autonomy (e.g. Little, 1995, 2000; La Ganza, 2008; Lamb and Reinders, 2008; Smith and Erdoğan, 2008), on the means for developing teacher autonomy such as reflective practice, action research and exploratory practice (e.g. Vieira, 2003; Huang, 2005), or on the constraints on teachers' exercise of autonomy (e.g. McGrath, 2000; Aoki, 2002; Vieira, 2003; Benson and Huang, 2008). These studies, however, treated teacher autonomy as a concept that was confined to the language classroom.

Regardless of their subject areas, teachers do ‘most of the real work of the school’ such as maintaining order in schools, meeting parents, organising extra-curricular events, or initiating or attending outreach activities within their communities (Biddle et al., 1997, p. 2). They are not individuals who are only involved in their students’ learning but rather are participants in their work contexts (Lindblad, 1997). The acknowledgement of teachers’ role expansion is not recent, having possibly first been described in a systematic fashion over four decades ago by Hoyle (1969) who portrayed teachers in the context of industrial society, the school, and the classroom. The teacher’s role and the tasks assigned to teachers have been discussed in more extensive ways in recent years particularly in relation to the concept of teacher leadership (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001; Harris and Muijs, 2003; Frost, 2012).

By considering teacher autonomy as a workplace construct within and outside the classroom and English teachers as members of large social organisations who fulfil a number of other duties and responsibilities within schools, this current PhD research study contributes to the field of applied linguistics for language learning and teaching by providing an alternative approach to teacher autonomy and extending our understanding of it.

The study demonstrates that the role of teachers, including English teachers in today’s schools, is not confined to the classroom or their subject areas. Therefore, as stated in Chapter 1 in this thesis, it makes little sense to limit language teacher autonomy to the exercise of discretion or freedom only within the classroom, in relation to the choice of language teaching methods, syllabus content, or resources, or to the extent to which teachers are able to foster learner autonomy. From the

outset, the emphasis in this thesis was that the research on teacher autonomy in the field of language learning and teaching should go beyond the classroom. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study in the field of language teaching in both the international and the Turkish contexts that researches the concept of teacher autonomy beyond the classroom taking into account all four areas of teacher functioning: teaching and assessment, school management, professional development and curriculum development.

Critical realism

Another contribution this study makes to the existing research on the concept of teacher autonomy both in the field of applied linguistics and in the general teacher autonomy literature is its use of critical realism and its exploration of the relationship between agency and structure as a framework for understanding the emergence of teacher autonomy. According to Roy Bhaskar, the founder of critical realism, society is not created by people because 'it always pre-exists them and is a necessary condition for their activity' (Bhaskar, 1998a, p. 216). Instead we need to see society 'as an ensemble of structures, practices and conventions' reproduced and transformed by individuals (Bhaskar, 1998a, p. 216). This does not mean that society is the product of human activity, but that it does not exist independently of it. From a critical realist perspective, agents have the power to reproduce and transform their existing state of affairs (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998; Mackenzie and Stoljar, 2000). In order to achieve this, however, they need to recognise that they have this power and that they can improve their present conditions and have an idea about how to do this (Manicas, 1998).

Using critical realism to frame our account of teacher autonomy allowed us to consider English teachers as active agents with emergent powers. As Astbury and Leeuw, (2010) suggest, teachers are not billiard balls, whose behaviour – when impacted - is determined entirely by enablements or constraints generated by social structures. As explained in Chapter 3 (Section 3.7) of the thesis, this would be to assume that teachers behave autonomously when conditions are enabling and not when they are constraining. The explanation critical realism offers is that teachers can behave autonomously if they choose to do so and if the right conditions exist, or they can choose to create their own opportunities for autonomy by critically evaluating the social structures within which they are operating, and finding a way around the constraints that these represent, to make changes. This is how autonomy is seen to emerge in this study and it is at this level that teachers take steps to create spaces for autonomous actions.

The focus in this PhD research study has been on exploring the concept of teacher autonomy in the context of Turkish state lower secondary schools with reference to English language teaching. The study aimed to investigate how teacher autonomy was understood in this particular context, how it was exercised, and what mechanisms shaped the understanding and the exercise of autonomy. The critical realist model made it possible to analyse the emergence of autonomous teacher behaviour, how it is inhibited or enabled, how structures interact with agency and how teachers as active agents create spaces – in a sometimes unpromising environment - for autonomous action.

Drawing on critical realism, this study offers a different approach to understanding and researching teacher autonomy and the mechanisms behind its emergence. It

shows that teacher autonomy emerges as a result of a complex interplay between social structures and agency and also offers insights into the kinds of relationship between these constructs. The literature on teacher autonomy, as was established in Chapter 3, examines individual and environmental constraints on teacher autonomy at the empirical level. Through the use of critical realism, this study offers an exploration that goes beyond this and offers explanations about the mechanisms behind the factors that enable or inhibit teacher autonomy.

The correlation between teacher autonomy and teachers' years of experience

Two widely-cited quantitative studies undertaken by Pearson and Hall (1993), and Pearson and Moomaw (2005) in general teacher autonomy literature suggest that neither perceptions of, nor the exercise of teacher autonomy are related to teachers' years of experience. As a mixed methods study, the data from this PhD research study contributes to the existing teacher autonomy literature and suggests that as teachers accumulate experience, the extent to which they enact agency in their work may change. This adds validity to Astbury and Leeuw (2010) who argued that 'a key contextual aspect of the operation of mechanisms in the social world is human interpretation of social structures and events' (p. 370).

An example of how teachers' years of experience may shape the extent to which they enact agency in work can be found in the interview conducted with Sema who argued she had never thought about making suggestions to MoNE about professional development training, because based on her previous experience, she was sure that she would not get any response. For that reason, she did not see any point in taking action and contacting MoNE to suggest new training seminars in line with her and her colleagues' needs. Another example was seen in the interview data

obtained from Derya who stated that she had learnt to make false statements in the end of term reports as a result of experience gained over the years. While in some cases, experience can lead to a negative enactment of agency, in others the opposite may occur. When we take agency as one of the determinants of teacher autonomy, it can be said that there is a relationship between teachers' years of experience and their exercise of autonomy.

The discussions of ELT in Turkey

This PhD research study also highlights some important implications for the Turkish government's aim to improve the quality of the education system with a focus on English language teaching. In the first chapter of this thesis, it was stated that by 2023 the government aims to make a number of changes in the education system including promoting the idea of people-oriented management in schools, undertaking curricular reforms, or restructuring teacher education programmes. It was also noted that while a series of changes has been made so far, the English proficiency levels of Turkish students remain a problem for the country. The findings of this PhD study can be used to help open up new opportunities to re-examine the failure to learn English in the country by shifting the focus to Turkish teachers of English and their professional lives.

A shift in the focus is necessary because as Biddle et al. (1997) observe teachers do most of the work in schools and they are one of the most important dynamics of the education system and it has been argued in this thesis that autonomy is an important concept for several reasons. Three of these were highlighted in Chapter 3 (Section 3.2.3) by referring to the work of Ryan and Deci (2006). The first is performance and creativity. When autonomous motivation is undermined, there will

be a decline in performance, which requires ‘flexible, heuristic, creative, or complex capacities’ (p. 1564). The second is the quality of working relationships. When people are supported for autonomy, this will facilitate their attachment to their work. The third is well-being and psychopathology. Autonomy is seen as a necessary work place construct for maximising work performance and adjustment (Deci and Ryan, 2014). Furthermore, various studies showed a link between teacher autonomy and job satisfaction, empowerment, professionalism (e.g. Pearson and Moomaw, 2005), student success (Ayril et al, 2014); and positive school climate (Sarafidou and Chatziionnidis, 2013). Similarly, the Finnish education system is a good example of the potential link between teacher autonomy and student achievement as Sahlberg (2007) established in his study.

Inclusion of diverse participants

What we know about teacher autonomy is largely based on studies in which the sole participants were teachers (e.g. McGrath, 2000; Vieira, 2003; Lepine, 2007; Gitlin, 2011; Öztürk, 2012; Xu, 2015). Only a few examined the views of head teachers, too (e.g. Webb, 2002; Helgøy and Homme, 2007). One of the key strengths of the current study is that it explored the understandings and exercise of teacher autonomy not only from the perspective of Turkish teachers of English, but also through the perceptions of head teachers and educational administrators. The inclusion of diverse participants working at various levels of the education system provided a more complete picture of the concept of teacher autonomy in the country

6.6 Limitations

This section discusses the theoretical and methodological limitations of this study.

According to Hammersley (2009), the 'critical' in critical realism suggests that this theory diagnoses defects in the society under investigation and aims to offer explanations for social change. Hammersley (2009) warns that all research should be critical, but when research aims to both produce knowledge and bring about social change, the conclusion that can be derived from that research is likely to be biased because of initial assumptions about the defects in that society. Critical realism, however, is not just about providing a set of practical policies, or guiding principles of society as opposed to what some of its opponents argue (e.g. Magill, 1991). It simply offers perspectives on the social phenomenon under investigation and the society. Nevertheless, in an attempt to avoid the biases that Hammersley (2009) warns of, the limits to what social research can offer are acknowledged in this study (e.g. predictability in doing research in open systems) and the claims critical realism makes have been considered carefully. As a matter of fact, this PhD study does not make any claims about social change. Instead, it focuses on the critical realist approach to structure and agency and the interplay between them in order to explore the understanding and exercise of teacher autonomy.

A second limitation concerns the generalizability of the findings. As was spelt out in Chapter 4 (Section 4.2), in critical realism there are three levels to reality. These are the real, actual and empirical. Critical realism does not seek for generalisation at the level of the empirical. What is important in critical realism is to move from surface to depth. So, the generality claims this study makes are limited to the level of

mechanisms. As Danermark *et al.* (2002) highlight, deep structures and mechanisms are the conditions that make something what it is and can be more or less general. In exploring these deep structures for this research, it was important to seek participation from different agents involved in the education system. This included Turkish teachers of English, head teachers and educational administrators.

A third limitation that merits attention is that the observation and interview study were carried out in a single province. An observation/interview study undertaken with participants from different provinces would have generated further examples of the exercise of autonomy by teachers. This is grounded on the understanding that how an agent perceives certain enabling or constraining structures may result either in the emergence or the impedance of teacher autonomy and that agency is an emergent phenomenon dependent on context and time. The tension between the survey and interview data, particularly in regard to professional development, was an example of this.

6.7 Recommendations for further research

This section provides recommendations for further research.

First, this study has been premised on the view that, like other teachers in school, English teachers are also participants in their work contexts and are responsible for fulfilling a number of tasks, both inside and outside classrooms. Therefore, any research investigating the concept of teacher autonomy in relation to language teachers should extend its focus from classrooms to the school context in general. This kind of research must meet the challenge of determining whether teacher

autonomy outside the classroom has any impact on the exercise of autonomy by teachers in classrooms, or vice versa. The data provided an example of this in the falsification of assessment and project grades. Where there is no space for autonomy or remedy outside the classroom, a distorted form of autonomy is exercised within it.

Besides, this study used Bhaskar's critical realist model in order to explore teacher autonomy in the context of Turkish state lower secondary schools with a particular focus on Turkish teachers of English and defined teacher autonomy as emerging through the interplay between social structures and agency. The study findings provided examples for such an interplay. In order to extend our knowledge of teacher autonomy, more research is needed with a critical realist focus. This type of research will not only provide further insights into the mechanisms influencing teacher autonomy, but also into how these factors interact with each other. Such an approach also has the potential to uncover the processes for development and exercise of teacher autonomy.

Moreover, the analysis of data discussed in this chapter revealed a mechanism, which was potentially deeper: trust. Referring to Lopes *et al.*'s work (1994), it was suggested that the existence of strategic control strategies in Turkish state lower secondary schools might result from a lack of trust that MoNE places in teachers, their capacities and expertise. The data obtained from the educational administrators supported this. The data also revealed a general distrust within and around the education system. In addition to the attitudes of some of the educational administrators towards English teachers, centralised curriculum and the insistence on the use of textbooks, other events observed in the data included the use of 147-

telephone line by parents and teacher attitudes towards the school committees and teacher focus group meetings. A mixed methods study which examines the notion of trust, with a deep focus on the recent geopolitical context of Turkey and its education policy is needed to confirm the potential link between trust and teacher autonomy.

Finally, a study into the emergent nature of agency and its powers, coupled with an assessment of existing social structures and how they are perceived by specific agents could provide further insights into understanding the concept of teacher autonomy. Hence, in order to explore the question of how agency influences the exercise of teacher autonomy within this context in more detail, a longitudinal quantitative and qualitative study of the experience of English teachers would be necessary. This kind of study can benefit from an examination of parents' views in its research design.

6.8 Concluding remarks and reflection

This PhD study sought to explore the concept of teacher autonomy in the context of Turkish state lower secondary schools with reference to Turkish teachers of English. I provided an overview of the Turkish education system in Chapter 2 in this thesis. Through critical realism, the philosophical base of my research, I combined philosophical, psychological and sociological perspectives on autonomy in order to better understand the concept in relation to teachers, and ensured the participation of diverse participants in my mixed methods investigation.

In this PhD study, responses to three research questions were sought. The first research question explored the understanding of teacher autonomy in the Turkish state lower secondary school context with reference to English language teaching. It was found that teacher autonomy was a meaningful concept within the education system. The participants' definitions of autonomy varied, but they all agreed that the exercise of autonomy by teachers was necessary while acknowledging the limits imposed by the education system. The second research question investigated the emergence of teacher autonomy in relation to four areas of teacher functioning: teaching and assessment, school management, professional development and curriculum development. Some of the key findings in response to this question are as follows:

- ✚ Teachers in my sample generally enjoyed autonomy in the area of teaching and assessment, tailored their lessons to the needs of their students and prepared assessment activities in line with student levels and at times took action for the benefit of students, evaluating the emerging demands, dilemmas and ambiguities of the classroom. Distorted forms of autonomy were found in the data.
- ✚ In relation to school management, it was found that teachers were able to become engaged in the decisions relating to their weekly timetabling and their choice of year groups and classes.
- ✚ The data from the survey and teacher interview study varied widely, thus making it difficult to distinguish exactly how teacher autonomy was exercised in relation to professional development. The survey responses suggested (Section 5.2.4) that nearly half of respondents played an active role in this, but there was little evidence in the analysis of interview

and observation data that teachers exercised autonomy in relation to their professional development.

✚ In the case of teacher autonomy in relation to curriculum development, teachers could exercise autonomy in this area through teacher focus group meetings. However the way MoNE directorates dealt with these meeting reports seemed to constrain teachers' causal powers to develop autonomy.

The final research question was concerned with the exploration of the mechanisms that shape the understanding and the exercise of teacher autonomy. The mechanisms that were identified in the study were: the geopolitical context, compliance and accountability, trust, school culture, and teacher collegiality mechanisms.

When I embarked on this journey, I argued tentatively that this study was not for or against the positive nature of teacher autonomy, but was rather an exploration of the place of teacher autonomy in the Turkish education system, about which I had some preconceived ideas. I believed that, despite its democratic characteristics, which implied greater autonomy for teachers, the Turkish education system was highly centralised and unfamiliar with the idea of teacher autonomy. The analysis of documents as reported in Chapter 5 showed that, despite the absence of teacher autonomy as a term in the policy documents, the idea of teacher autonomy was valued by MoNE. This generated a new awareness in my thinking about the concept of teacher autonomy: A centralised system did not automatically operate in opposition to teacher autonomy. In order to explain the emergence of teacher autonomy within this context and the deep dimension to its emergence, I adopted

Roy Bhaskar's transformational model of the connection between social structure and agency.

Undertaking this study has taken me into varied, challenging and at times frustrating experiences. Bhaskar's transformational model, for instance, provided me with a framework to analyse the emergence of autonomous teacher behaviour, how it was inhibited or enabled, how structures influenced agency and how or whether teachers – as active agents – were able to create spaces for autonomous action. As presented in Chapter 3 (Section 3.7), this model allowed me to consider structure and agency as two ontologically different but interrelated domains of reality, with their own properties and powers.

Whilst Bhaskar's model of agency and structure seemed plain, my encounter with the complex interplay between agency and structure in the data was very unsettling. This was a 'two steps forward, one step back' phase. I was repeatedly pulled in different directions in the debates about agency and structure, between the views of Roy Bhaskar, Margaret Archer, and Anthony Giddens. After working through these stages, I was able to develop a better understanding of agency and structure.

Although they both have their own properties and powers, because of the close interplay between them they were analytically inseparable and the interplay between them was complicated. This made the process of writing the findings chapter and answering the second research question particularly challenging, but enabled me to explore and experiment in various writing and presentation styles.

Overall, undertaking this study has enabled me to develop a wide range of skills, and a more sophisticated understanding of the field. It will facilitate my future growth as a researcher in the field of education and as an individual in life. It is not without

flaws, but it offers useful insights into the concept of teacher autonomy in the Turkish educational context. It helps us to extend our understanding of Turkish teachers of English, their exercise of autonomy in their work context, the deeper factors that are inherent in the education system which shape the exercise of autonomy by teachers.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Teacher Autonomy Survey

Dear Colleague,

I am a doctoral student at the Open University, Faculty of Education and Language Studies, UK. I would like to invite you to take part in my research, which aims to investigate the concept of teacher autonomy. I am particularly interested in exploring how this concept is understood in state lower secondary school (devlet ortaokullari) settings in Turkey, in relation to the English Language Teaching profession. There are six sections in the questionnaire and it will take you approximately 10 minutes to complete it. Please try to complete as many questions as you can. Your responses will help further our understanding of the concept of teacher autonomy and the professional lives of English teachers in the country.

I am also seeking English teachers to assist me with my second and third means of inquiry: the observation of your daily work and interviews. Should you wish to further participate in the study, please provide your name and e-mail address at the end. I would like to assure you that these personal details will be protected by the UK Data Protection Act 1998. The participant data will be anonymised ahead of its analysis and presentation in the thesis.

The research project and materials have been approved by the Ethics Committee of the Open University, UK and the Republic of Turkey Ministry of National Education. By completing and submitting this survey, you are indicating your consent to participating in the study and for your inputs to be used anonymously in the project. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, up to the point where the data has been included in the final draft of the thesis on 5th June 2016. If you

withdraw from the study all data collected from you will be deleted and will not be used further in the research.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries. My e-mail address is betul.khalil@open.ac.uk.

Thank you for your help, it is much appreciated.

A. Information about you

1. Your gender:

☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Years of experience as an English teacher

☐ 0-4 ☐ 15-19 ☐ 5-9 ☐ 20-24 ☐ 10-14 ☐ 25+

3. Grades taught:

☐ Grade 5 ☐ Grade 6 ☐ Grade 7 ☐ Grade 8

B. Teaching and assessment

Tick the answer to the statement that best describes your experience as an English teacher.

4. I am free to use my own assessment activities in my class independent from those suggested by the Ministry of National Education.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

5. I determine the amount of homework to be assigned.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

6. I have a say over selecting English textbooks together with my colleagues at school.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

7. I determine how classroom space is used (e.g. putting desks in small groups).

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

8. I determine norms and rules for student classroom behaviour.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

9. I am free to select the teaching methods and strategies independent from those suggested by the Ministry of National Education.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

10. I have the flexibility to select specific topics and skills to be taught from the centralised English teaching curriculum.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

11. I find a way and time to teach things I like teaching in addition to those in the English teaching curriculum.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

12. I reward deserving students without the need to get the head teacher's consent.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

Please explain how important it is for you to have a say in these aspects (Write in Turkish, if you prefer).

C. School Management

Tick the answer to the statement that best describes your experience as a teacher.

13. I feel a great sense of involvement and ownership in what is happening in the school.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐
always

14. I am involved in making decisions about the school's budget planning.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

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D. Professional development

20. I identify my development targets and prepare an individual professional development plan.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

21. I engage in action research and/or exploratory practice to develop my teaching.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

22. I help those who have less teaching experience than I have.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

23. I take the risk of doing things differently in the classroom.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

24. As a teacher of English, I have the opportunity to make my professional needs heard before the content of national in-service training (hizmetici egitim) is determined by the Ministry of National Education.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

25. As a teacher of English, I can make suggestions to the Ministry about who should be appointed as instructors for the national in-service training.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

Please explain how important it is for you to have a say in these aspects (Write in Turkish, if you prefer).

E. Curriculum development

Tick the answer to the statement that best describes your experience as a teacher.

26. I have a good knowledge of national curriculum development processes.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

27. My work permits me to make contributions to the national curriculum development and redesign processes.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

28. I am offered the opportunity to raise issues about the national English curriculum and submit these to the National Curriculum Development Panel (via local authorities).

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

29. My main role with regard to curriculum consists of putting the prescribed national curriculum into practice in my teaching.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

30. I can initiate and administer new enrichment and cultural activities (e.g. organizing field trips to theatres, English movies, or organizing visits to the schools abroad).

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

31. I have flexibility in devising new learning materials for my students.

☐ not at all ☐ occasionally ☐ undecided ☐ frequently ☐ always

Please explain how important it is for you to have a say in these aspects (Write in Turkish, if you prefer).

F. Further participation

For the next stage of the study, I would like to observe your daily work. If you were to agree to participate, observations would take place in your school for a period of two weeks, and would involve no interaction with your students. I would also like to interview individual teachers to learn more about their professional lives. All interviews will be digitally recorded.

Would you be interested in participating in these phases of the study?

I am happy to be observed at school (If you agree, I as the researcher will approach the headteacher to gain access)

☐ Yes ☐ No

I am happy to be interviewed.

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered YES to either of these questions, please write your NAME, CONTACT DETAILS (phone number and/or e-mail address) and the CITY you live in. I would like to remind you that all these personal details including interview recordings will be securely stored and protected by the UK Data Protection Act 1998.

Appendix 2: Sample observation sheet

Observation in the classroom

Observer:	Class:
Teacher:	Number of students:
Age:	Topic:
Teaching experience:	Date:

Observation overview (e.g environment, activities, autonomous behaviours of students, peer support, interaction, etc.)

Teachers' understanding/experience of autonomy in the classroom

*IC: Information can be obtained through informal conversations

Indicators	Findings/observations	Comments
Determining and implementing his/her own assessment technique in the classroom (e.g after each task or in general) IC*		

The teacher determining amount of homework himself/herself or along with his/her students		
The teacher chooses materials used in the class IC*		
The teacher has a say over how classroom space is used and free to decorate it as s/he chooses.		
The teacher determines the rules for classroom behaviour IC*		
The teacher has control over the amount of time s/he spends on the topic		
The teacher chooses topic and skills from the centralised curriculum s/he wants whilst omitting others IC*		
The teacher is free to reward students without		

the consent of the head teacher		
The teacher is free to choose the way a specific topic is taught.		

New indicators emerged during observations:

Notes about informal conversations prior to the lesson (e.g. having a say over the topic, selection of materials)
Start IC: 'the results of my classroom assessments, rather than external assessments, determine the extent to which students have mastered the content I have taught.'

Extra notes/ comments	
Time:	Location:
Time:	Location:

Time:	Location:
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Observation -out of classroom

Notes about general working condition in the school/ Descriptive notes (e.g dress standards, school structure, nature of school's structure- flat, hierarchical, etc)

Understandings/ experience of teacher autonomy

Indicators	Findings/observations/informal conversations	Comments
Having a say over scheduling the use of teaching time IC*		
Discussing the matters pertaining to the English teaching curriculum with his/her colleagues. (e.g in teacher focus meetings, staff room)		
Introducing new		

ideas of implementing the curriculums (Observations in staff rooms, focus group meetings)		
Free to buy English books, materials IC*		
Moving in and out: leaving the school grounds during the school day		
Having a voice over wider school issues IC*		

Description of the nature of interaction

<p>What is the nature of interaction among teachers/ between teachers and the head teacher?</p> <p>Do teachers feel comfortable in approaching the head teacher?</p> <p>(IC* Enquire if there has been any time when a decision was made despite opposition of teachers.)</p>	
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Record of Informal conversations

Time, topic, Location	

Appendix 3: Sample interview questions (in English and Turkish)

Sample interview questions for Turkish teachers of English
<p>1. Could you explain what being a good teacher means to you?</p> <p>2. What do you understand by the terms (a) autonomy, (b) teacher autonomy?</p> <p>3. How important, if at all, is it for you as an English teacher to have autonomy?</p>
<p>(Interview informants will be asked to elaborate on some of the responses they have given to the questionnaire items.)</p> <p>1. How much discretion are you able to use in the classroom in the area of student teaching and assessment? (e.g. amount of homework, selection of textbook, disciplining students and etc.)</p> <p>1i: How important is it for you to use your discretion in this area?</p> <p>2. How much are you involved in your school's management issues? (e.g. budget planning, spending money from schools' budget for students' learning purposes, and etc.)</p> <p>2i: How important is it for you to be involved in your school's management?</p> <p>3. How much say do you have over your own professional development? (e.g. determining the content of in-service professional development programmes).</p> <p>3i How important is it for you to have a say over your own professional development?</p>

4. How much are you involved in the process of creating/redesigning the English teaching curriculum?

4i. How important is it for you to be involved in this process?

4ii. How much discretion do you use when implementing the curriculum?

5. Can you tell me a little about the student assessment process? Do you have a say in determining the format of the test, or agreeing the final marks?

6. Can we talk a little about professional development opportunities available for you? What kind of professional development activities have you participated in so far? How were they organized, by whom?

6i: How much do you know about any school-based professional development programmes available for teachers in the education system?

7. Have you ever been part of your school's development team?

7i: What kind of issues are being discussed in these meetings?

1. Tell me about what you think has the most influence on your teaching practice.

2. Tell me about what you think has the most influence on the degree of your participation on other school activities, especially those pertaining to school management?

3. What has the most influence over your ability to take initiative in your own professional development?

4. What are the factors you think influence your involvement in the process of creating/redesigning the English teaching curriculum?

5. Finally, how much personal discretion do you use when planning your day at school in general and in your classroom in particular?

- Tell me a little about teacher focus meetings. Who determines the agenda for these meetings?
- What input each teacher has first?
- Have you ever chaired one of these meetings?

Sample interview questions for head teachers and educational administrators

1. What constitutes a good English teacher for you?
2. How useful do you find the competences for good teachers outlined by the Ministry of National Education? To what extent do you share these?
3. What does the term teacher autonomy mean to you?
4. How important do you think it is, if at all, for the education system to have autonomous teachers?
5. How much discretion do you think English teachers are able to use in the classroom in the area of student teaching and assessment? (e.g. amount of homework, selection of textbook, disciplining students and etc.)
6. How much are English teachers involved in your school's management issues?
7. How much say do English teachers have over their own professional development?
- 7i: Can you tell me about the professional development programme in your school?
8. Are practising English teachers involved in the process of creating or redesigning the curriculum? What would you think about such involvement?
- 8i: How much discretion and flexibility are English teachers given when implementing the curriculum?

9. Having talked about teachers' exercise of autonomy at four levels, I wonder how much space you think should be given to teachers of English for the exercise of autonomy? To put it more simply, how free if at all do you think teachers are to exercise autonomy at each of these levels: a) teaching and assessment, (b) school management, (c) their own professional development, (d) curriculum development?

10. Are there any areas where you think that is inappropriate for teachers to be flexible, make their own decisions or to be involved in decision-making procedures that has been discussed earlier; or where you think their autonomy should be limited?

11. What do you think needs to be done to improve the quality of English teaching in your school/ in the schools for which you have responsibility?

12. MONE sent a fax to each secondary school in the nation that asks English teachers to strictly adhere to the centralised curriculum (a copy of this document is present during the interview). Whose responsibility in the school is it to make sure that teachers follow the curriculum exactly as demanded by MONE?

13. Can you tell me a little about the role of (your) school development team(s)?

13i: Who decides who will be a part of this team/these? What are the kinds of areas being discussed by this team/these teams? Is any English teacher in this team/these teams? Is anything related to school budget or school management discussed during these meetings? To what extent do you think teachers' participation in these teams influences, if at all, their overall performance at school, including their teaching?

14. How often are you -as a school head teacher- involved in issues of misbehaviour in the classroom? Whose responsibility do you think is it to deal with student behaviour?

Sample interview questions in the original language

Sample interview questions for Turkish teachers of English in Turkish

1. İyi bir İngilizce öğretmeni sizce nasıl olmalı?.
2. 'Özerklik' ve 'öğretmen özerkliği kavramları size neler ifade ediyor?
3. Bir İngilizce öğretmeni olarak az önce ifade ettiklerinizi göz önünde bulundurursak özerk olmak sizin için ne kadar önemli yada bir önem arz ediyor mu?

(Bu noktada katılımcılara anket sorularına vermiş oldukları bazı cevaplarla ilgili ilave sorular yöneltilecek)

4. Sınıfta öğrenci performansını değerlendirirken yada öğretimle ilgili herhangi bir konuda sağduyunuzu kullanmakta ne kadar özgürsünüz? (örn: ödev miktarı, ders kitabı seçimi, öğrencilerin disiplini vs.)

4i: Bu alanlarda sağduyunuzu kullanmak sizin için ne kadar önemli?

5. Okul yönetimi ile ilgili konulara ne kadar dahil ediliyorsunuz?

5i: Okul yönetimiyle ilgili konulara dahil edilmek sizin için ne önem ifade ediyor?

6. Kendi profesyonel gelişiminizle ilgili ne kadar söz hakkına sahipsiniz?

6i Kendi profesyonel gelişiminizle ilgili söz hakkına sahip olmak sizin için ne kadar

önemli?

7. İngilizce dersi müfredatının oluşturulması ya da yeniden dizayn edilmesi aşamasına herhangi bir şekilde ne kadar dahil ediliyorsunuz?

7i. Bu sürece dahil edilmek sizin için ne kadar ne anlama geliyor?

7ii. Müfredatı derslerinizde kullanırken ne kadar inisiyatif kullanıyorsunuz?

8. Öğrenci performans değerlendirmeleri nasıl yapılıyor? Testlerin yapılışı, formatlarını yada öğrencilerin aldıkları notları belirlemede ne kadar söz hakkınız var?

9. İngilizce öğretmenlerinin profesyonel anlamda gelişmesine fayda sağlayan ne tür fırsatlar var eğitim sisteminde? Bunlardan hangilerine katıldınız bugüne kadar? Nasıl ve kimler tarafından organize edilmişlerdi?

9i: Okul temelli mesleki gelişim programı hakkında neler biliyorsunuz?

10. Okulunuzun 'okul gelişim yönetim' ekibinde yer aldınız mı hiç?

10i: Bu ekip tarafından düzenlenen toplantılarda ne tür konuların değerlendirildiğiyle ilgili bilgi verebilir misiniz?

11. Dersleri işleyiş şekliniz üzerinde en çok etkisi bulunan faktörler nelerdir?

12. Okuldaki aktivitelere –özellikle yönetimle ilgili olanlara- olan katılımınızda belirleyici olan faktörler nelerdir?

13. Kendi profesyonel gelişiminizle ilgili konularda adım atarken karşınıza çıkan ve inisiyatifinizi etkileyen faktörler nelerdir?

14. Okulda ve sınıf içerisinde bir gününüzü planlarken sağduyunuzu ne derece kullanıyorsunuz? (Yaptığınız programlar ne derece sizin zihninizden dökülüyor?)

- İngilizce öğretmenleri zümre toplantılarından bahseder misiniz biraz? Bu toplantılarda hangi konuların görüşüleceğini kimler belirler?
- Bir öğretmen olarak hangi konunun görüşüleceğiyle ilgili ne kadar söz hakkınız bulunmakta?
- Bu toplantılara hiç başkanlık ettiniz mi?

Sample interview questions for head teachers and educational administrators in Turkish

1. İyi bir İngilizce öğretmeninde bulunması gereken özellikler sizce nelerdir?
2. Milli Eğitim tarafından yayınlanan öğretmen yeterliliklerini ne derece faydalı buluyorsunuz?
3. Öğretmen özerkliği kavramı sizin için ne anlama geliyor?
4. Eğitim sistemimizde özerk öğretmenlere sahip olmak sizce önemli mi? Niçin?
5. Sizce İngilizce öğretmenleri sınıf içinde öğretim ve değerlendirme alanında ne kadar sağduyu kullanabiliyorlar? (örn: ödev miktarı, ders kitabı seçimi, öğrenci disiplini, vs.)
6. Okul yönetimiyle ilgili konulara öğretmenler ne kadar dahil ediliyorlar?
7. İngilizce öğretmenleri kendi profesyonel gelişimleriyle ilgili ne kadar söz hakkına sahipler?

7i: Okulunuzda/ okullardaki kişisel gelişim imkanlarıyla/programıyla ilgili bilgi verebilir misiniz?

8. İngilizce öğretmenleri müfredat oluşturma yada geliştirme süreçlerine dahil ediliyorlar mı? Bu tür bir uygulamayla ilgili görüşleriniz nelerdir?

8i: Müfredatı uygularken İngilizce öğretmenleri ne kadar esnek davranıp sağduyu kullanabiliyorlar?

9. Sizce İngilizce öğretmenlerine az önce bahsettiğimiz alanlarda özerk olabilmeleri için ne kadar alan tanınmalı? Bir başka deyişle öğretmenler bu alanlarda inisiyatif yada sağduyu kullanmakta ne kadar özgürler?

10. Öğretmenler için sizce sınırlar olmalı mı? Bir başka deyişle öğretmenlerin kendi kararlarını veremeyecekleri yada bir takım kararlara dahil edilmelerinin uygun olmayacağı konular var mı? Öğretmenlerin özerklikleri nerede kısıtlanmalı?

11. Okulunuzda/ okullarda İngilizce eğitiminin kalitesini artırmak için sizce neler yapılmalı?

12. Eğitim sisteminde yapılan son değişiklikleri takiben İngilizce öğretmenlerinden müfredatı birebir ve zamanında yetiştirilmeleri isteniyor. Bir öğretmenin müfredatı birebir ve zamanında yetiştirip yetiştirmediğinin kontrolü nasıl yapılıyor?

13. Okul gelişim ve yönetim ekibinin görevi nedir?

13i: Bu ekipte görev alacak kimselerin seçimi nasıl yapılıyor? Bu ekip tarafından organize edilen toplantılarda genel olarak değerlendirilen konular nelerdir?

Okulunuzdaki gelişim ve yönetim ekibine dahil olmuş bir İngilizce öğretmeni var mı?

14. Sizce bu ekibe katılımda bulunmak öğretmenin okul içinde özellikle sınıfta performansını iyi anlamda etkiliyor mu?

15. Okul müdürü olarak sınıfıçi öğrenci disipliniyle ilgili konulara ne kadar dahil oluyorsunuz? Öğrenci disiplinini sağlamak sizce en başta kimin sorumluluğu olmalı?

Appendix 4: Ethics approval



The Open University

From Dr Duncan Banks
Chair, The Open University Human Research Ethics Committee
Email duncan.banks@open.ac.uk
Extension 59198

To Betul Khalil, FELS

Subject *"Exploring how the concept of teacher autonomy is understood in lower secondary schools in Turkey, with respect to English language teaching."*

HREC Ref HREC/2013/ 67358/ Khalil/1
Ref
Submitted 23 December 2013
Date 23 December 2013

Memorandum

This memorandum is to confirm that the research protocol for the above-named research project, as submitted for ethics review, has been given **a favourable opinion** by the Open University Human Research Ethics Committee. Please note that the OU research ethics review procedures are fully compliant with the majority of grant awarding bodies and their Frameworks for Research Ethics.

Please make sure that any question(s) relating to your application and approval are sent to Research-REC-Review@open.ac.uk quoting the HREC reference number above. We will endeavour to respond as quickly as possible so that your research is not delayed in any way.

At the conclusion of your project, by the date that you stated in your application, the Committee would like to receive a summary report on the progress of this project, any ethical issues that have arisen and how they have been dealt with.

Regards,

Dr Duncan Banks
Chair OU HREC

Appendix 5: Application for permission for research in Turkey

T.C MİLLİ EĞİTİM BAKANLIĞI YENİLİK VE EĞİTİM TEKNOLOJİLERİ GENEL MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ'NE;

Open Üniversitesi'nde (İngiltere) burslu doktora öğrencisiyim. Doktora tez konum öğretmen özerkliği konsepti olup, bu konseptin İngilizce öğretmenliği bağlamında ortaokullarda nasıl algılandığını ve kullanıldığını araştırmayı hedefliyorum. Araştırmada kullanacağım veri toplama teknikleri döküman analizi, anket çalışması, okul gözlemi ve yüzyüze görüşmelerden oluşmaktadır. Çalışma sizin de izninizle [REDACTED] ilinde gerçekleştirelecek.

Başvuruyu müdürlüğünüze yapıyor olmam [REDACTED] İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü'nün size yönlendirmesi sebebiyledir. Gerekli izni alabilmek için hazırladığım tüm belgeleri ekte müdürlüğünüze sunmuş olup başvurumun kabulü hususunda gereğini arz ederim. Doktora araştırmamın gerekliliği olan pilot çalışmamı Ocak ayının sonu itibarıyla başlatabilmem ve Haziran ayında eğitim gördüğüm üniversite ilk raporu sunabilmem için araştırma izninizin ivedilikle çıkarılması hususunda da gereğini arz ederim. Anket çalışması sırasında [REDACTED] İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü'nden yardım talep etmem söz konusu olduğundan Genel Müdürlüğünüz tarafından ilgili il müdürlüğüne hitaben yazılacak bir yazının mümkünse tarafıma ulaştırılmasını da rica etmek istiyorum. Başvurumla ilgili olarak bana aşağıda belirttiğim adreslerden yazılı ya da elektronik olarak ulaşabilirsiniz.

Saygılarımla,

Betul Khalil, betul.khalil@open.ac.uk

Adres: CREET, Stuart Hall Building, Level 3, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, UK, MK7 6AA

Appendix 6: Permission for research in Turkey



T.C.
MİLLÎ EĞİTİM BAKANLIĞI
Yenilik ve Eğitim Teknolojileri Genel Müdürlüğü

Sayı : 81576613/605/186776

14/01/2014

Konu: Araştırma İzni

Sayın: Betül KHALİL
(CREET, Stuart Hall Building, Level 3, The Open University
Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, UK, MK7 6AA)

İlgi: 30/12/2013 tarihli dilekçe.

İlgi yazı ile Genel Müdürlüğümüze başvurmuş olduğunuz "Öğretmen Özerkliği" isimli tezinizde kullanılacak veri toplama araçları ve araştırma iznine ait talebiniz, Genel Müdürlüğümüzce incelenmiştir.

Onaylı bir örneği Bakanlığımızda muhafaza edilen, uygulama sırasında da mühürlü ve imzalı örnekten çoğaltılan veri toplama aracının eğitim öğretimi aksatmamak ve gönüllülük esas olmak kaydıyla, uygulanmasında bir sakınca görülmemektedir.

Bilgilerinizi ve gereğini rica ederim.

Mustafa KOÇ
Bakan a.
Genel Müdür

EK: Veri Toplama Araçları (9 Sayfa)

Güvenli Elektronik İmza
Aslı ile Aynıdır
14.01.2014
Mustafa KOÇ
SEF

Bu belge, 5070 sayılı Elektronik İmza Kanununun 5 inci maddesi gereğince güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır. Evrak teyidi <http://evraksorgu.meb.gov.tr> adresinden 286e-a8b7-3758-8954-e2fa kodu ile yapılabilir.

Atatürk Biv. 06648 Kızılay/ANKARA
Elektronik Ağ: www.meb.gov.tr
e-posta: adsoyad@meb.gov.tr

Ayrıntılı bilgi için: Ad SOYAD Ünvan
Tel: (0 312) XXX XX XX
Faks: (0 312) XXX XX XX

Appendix 7: Consent forms

(For English Language Teacher)

Research Title: Exploring how the concept of teacher autonomy is understood in lower secondary schools in Turkey, with reference to English Language teaching

	Please initial box
I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet provided with the questionnaire and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason before the process of data anonymization starts.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in the above study by filling the questionnaire.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to be interviewed and I agree to the interview to being audio-recorded and written out word-for-word later. The recording will be securely stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to be observed at school	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree that the results of this research will be used in a thesis; they may also be used later in future reports, articles and presentations, in accordance with the Data Protection Act.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name of Participant	Signature

Date

Name of Researcher

(Consent form designed for school head teachers and educational administrators)

Research Title: Exploring how the concept of teacher autonomy is understood in lower secondary schools in Turkey with reference to English language teaching

	Please initial box
I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet provided by the researcher and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason before the process of data anonymization starts.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to be interviewed and I agree to the interview to being audio-recorded and written out word-for-word later. The recording will be securely stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree that the results of this research will be used in a thesis; they may also be used later in future reports, articles and presentations, in accordance with the Data Protection Act.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher

Consent forms designed for teachers in Turkish

Araştırma Başlığı: Türkiye'deki ortaokullarda İngilizce öğretmenliği bağlamında öğretmen özerkliği kavramının nasıl anlaşıldığı ve kullanıldığı üzerine bir araştırma

	Lütfen kutucuğu işaretleyin
Ekte sunulan araştırmayla ilgili bilgi içeren belgeyi okuyup anladığımı ve aklıma takılan her soruyu sorma fırsatı buldugumu teyit ederim.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Katılımımın tamamen gönüllü olduğunu ve toplanan verilerin anonimize (kişisel verilerin araştırmadan tamamen çıkarılması) süreci başlamadan önce herhangi bir sebep göstermeksizin çalışmadan geri çekilebileceğimi biliyorum.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yukarıda bahsi geçen çalışmaya anketi doldurma suretiyle katılmayı kabul ediyorum.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Araştırmacı ile birebir görüşme yapmayı ve bu görüşmenin ses kaydının alınmasını ve sonrasında kelime kelime yazıya dökülmesini kabul ediyorum. Tüm kayıtların kişisel bilgileri koruma ilkeleri göz önünde tutularak saklanacağını biliyorum.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Araştırmayla elde edilecek sonuçların bir tezde kullanılacağını ayrıca gerekirse ileride raporlarda, makalelerde ve sunumlarda da değerlendirilebileceğini biliyorum.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Katılımcının ismi	Tarih
	İmza

Araştırmacının ismi

Onay Formu (Okul müdürleri ve diğer katılımcılar için düzenlenmiştir)

Araştırma Başlığı: Türkiye'deki ortaokullarda İngilizce öğretmenliği bağlamında öğretmen özerkliği kavramının nasıl anlaşıldığı ve kullanıldığı üzerine bir araştırma

	Lütfen kutucuğu işaretleyin
Ekte sunulan araştırmayla ilgili bilgi içeren belgeyi okuyup anladığımı ve aklıma takılan her soruyu sorma fırsatı bulduğumu teyit ederim.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Katılımımın tamamen gönüllü olduğunu ve toplanan verilerin anonimize (kişisel verilerin araştırmadan tamamen çıkarılması) süreci başlamadan önce herhangi bir sebep göstermeksizin çalışmadan geri çekilebileceğimi biliyorum.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Araştırmacı ile birebir görüşme yapmayı ve bu görüşmenin ses kaydının alınmasını ve sonrasında kelime kelime yazıya dökülmesini kabul ediyorum. Tüm kayıtların kişisel bilgileri koruma ilkeleri göz önünde tutularak saklanacağını biliyorum	<input type="checkbox"/>
Araştırmayla elde edilecek sonuçların bir tezde kullanılacağını ayrıca gerekirse ileride raporlarda, makalelerde ve sunumlarda da değerlendirilebileceğini biliyorum.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Katılımcının ismi

Tarih

İmza

Araştırmacının ismi

Appendix 8: Information sheet

(Designed for Turkish teachers of English)

My name is Betul Khalil, a doctoral student at the Open University, Faculty of Education and Language Studies, UK. I would like to invite you to take part in my research which aims to explore how the term teacher autonomy is understood in lower secondary school settings in Turkey with reference to English Language Teaching profession. The study will employ a combination of data collection methods. The first two sources will be document analysis and a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire is composed of 5 sections and it will take you only 15-20 minutes to complete. If you agree to participate, you will be one of the 133 questionnaire respondents. I am also seeking two volunteers to assist me with my third means of inquiry, which is the observation of your daily work. If you were to agree to participate, observations would take place in your school for a period of two weeks, and would involve no interaction with your students. The final source will be follow-up interviews to be conducted with 6 English teachers, 3 school headteachers and 3 educational administrators. All interviews will be digitally recorded and written out word-for-word later. The recordings will be securely stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act. I am looking forward to talking to you to learn more about your understanding of autonomy at work and if you would like to be involved in the next steps of the study, then do please state it at the end of the questionnaire. Your views are of the highest value to me and they will constitute the backbone of my research. I believe the findings will be very beneficial in furthering our understanding of the concept, and more importantly they are likely to play an important role in making your voice heard by the Ministry of National Education.

Your participation is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study and which elements you wish to take part in. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason before the process of data anonymization starts. Please note that any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential. You can opt in for the study by filling in the consent form. The results of the research will be used in my thesis. They may be used later in future reports, articles and presentations, in accordance with Data Protection Act. The research has been approved by the Open University Human Research Ethics Committee and permission for it has been granted by the Ministry of National Education. Thank you for taking time to read the information sheet.

Betul Khalil

Research Student, Open University, FELS, CREET

Information sheet designed for head teachers and educational administrators

Study Title: Exploring how the concept of teacher autonomy is understood in lower secondary schools in Turkey with reference to English language teaching

My name is Betul Khalil, a doctoral student at the Open University, Faculty of Education and Language Studies, UK. I would like to invite you to take part in my research which aims to explore how the term teacher autonomy is understood in lower secondary school settings in Turkey with reference to English Language Teaching profession. The study will employ a combination of data collection methods. The first two sources will be data analysis and survey questionnaire study. The survey questionnaire will be administered to 133 English teachers. The third source of inquiry will be observations of English teachers' daily work for the duration of 2 weeks. No interaction will be made with the students during these observations. The final source will be follow-up interviews to be conducted with 6 English teachers, 3 school headteachers and 3 educational administrators. All interviews will be digitally recorded and written out word-for-word later. The recordings will be securely stored in accordance with the Data Protection. I am looking forward to talking to you to learn more about your understanding of autonomy at work and if you would like to participate in the study, then do please fill in the consent form attached. Your views are of highest value to me and they will constitute the backbone of my research. I believe the findings will be very beneficial in furthering our understanding of the concept, and more importantly in opening up new paths in discussing how the quality of English Language Teaching in the country can be maximised.

Your participation is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason before the process of data anonymization starts. Please note that any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential. The results of the research will be used in my thesis. They may be used later in my future reports, articles and presentations, in accordance with the Data Protection Act. The research has been approved by the Open University Human Research Ethics Committee and permission for it has been granted by the Ministry of National Education.

Thank you for taking time to read the information sheet.

Betul Khalil

Research Student

Open University, FELS, CREET

Information sheet designed for English teachers (in Turkish)

Araştırmanın içeriği ile ilgili bilgi (İngilizce öğretmenleri için düzenlenmiştir)

Çalışma başlığı: Türkiye'deki ortaokullarda İngilizce öğretmenliği bağlamında öğretmen özerkliği kavramının nasıl anlaşıldığı üzerine bir araştırma

Değerli meslektaşım,

İsmim Betül Khalil. Open Üniversitesi (İngiltere) Eğitim ve Dil Araştırmaları Fakültesi doktora öğrencisiyim. Doktora çalışmam İngilizce öğretmenliği bağlamında öğretmen özerkliği kavramının Türkiye'deki ortaokullarda nasıl algılandığı ve kullanıldığınıyla ilgili olup, sizlerden bu çalışmaya katılımınızı rica ediyorum.

Çalışmada birden fazla veri toplama yöntemi kullanılacak. İlk iki yöntem döküman analizi ve anket çalışması olacak. Anket 5 bölümden oluşmuş olup doldurmanız 15 ila 20 dakikanızı alacaktır. Katılmayı Kabul ederseniz 133 anket katılımcısından biri olacaksınız. Araştırmanın bir ilerki aşaması olan okul içi gözlemde aranızdan iki gönüllü öğretmenin yardımına ihtiyacım olacak. Eğer bu iki öğretmenden biri olmayı arzu ederseniz, gözlemler çalıştığınız okullarda hem sınıf içi hem de sınıf dışında gerçekleştirilecek olup yaklaşık iki hafta sürecektir. Gözlemler sırasında öğrencilerinizle herhangi bir iletişim kurulmayacaktır. Çalışmada kullanılacak son veri toplama yöntemi ilk yöntemleri takiben gerçekleştirilecek yüzyüze görüşmelerdir. Görüşmeler yine aranızdan gönüllü olacağını ümit ettiğim 12 İngilizce öğretmeniyle yapılacaktır. Ayrıca bilginize sunmak isterim ki İngilizce öğretmenleriyle yapılacak görüşmelerin yanı sıra 3 okul müdürü ve 3 Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı çalışanıyla da görüşmeler gerçekleştirilecektir. Tüm görüşmeler ses kayıt cihazına kaydedilecek olup görüşmenin hemen ardından kelime kelime yazıya

aktarılabilecek. Tüm kayıtlar bana ait sifre korumalı bir dosyada tutulacak ve eğitim görmekte olduğum üniversitenin kişisel verileri koruma ilkeleri gözönünde bulundurularak saklanacak.

Öğretmen özerkliği ile ilgili düşüncelerinizi duymak ve okul içerisinde çeşitli alanlarda ne kadar inisiyatif ve sağduyu kullanabildiğinizi, karar verme süreçlerine ne kadar dahil olabildiğinizle ilgili sizlerle sohbet edebileceğimizi ümit ediyorum.

Araştırmaya ekte bulunan anketi doldurarak ya da anketin sonunda bir sonraki aşamalara dahil olmak istediğinizi belirterek katılabilirsiniz. Sizlerin katılımı benim için çok önemli olup, paylaşacağınız görüşleriniz ve tecrübeleriniz doktora tezimin omurgasını oluşturacak. İnanıyorum ki araştırmadan elde edilecek bulgular öğretmen özerkliği konseptini Türkiye bağlamında daha iyi anlamamıza fayda sağlayacağı gibi, siz öğretmenlerin konseptle ilgili düşüncelerini Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı'na duyurmada aracılık edecektir.

Son olarak şunu belirtmek isterim ki araştırmaya katılıp katılmama kararı tamamen size ait. Kararınız olumlu ise lütfen ekteki onay formunu doldurup imzalayınız (isminizi yazmanız da yeterli olacaktır). Katılımınızı imzayla tasdikledikten sonra herhangi bir sebep belirtmeksizin bu araştırmadan dilediğiniz an çekilmekte özgürsünüz. Ancak kabul edersiniz ki bunu yapmanız toplanan verilerin anonimize süreci (kişisel verilerin araştırmadan tamamen çıkarılması) başladıktan sonra mümkün olmayacaktır. Bu süreç öncesinde de kimliğinizi ifşa edebilecek türden herhangi bir verinin tamamen gizli tutulacağını birkez daha vurgulamak istiyorum. Araştırmadan elde edilecek bulguların hazırlayacağım tezde kullanılacağını, ayrıca bunların daha sonra hazırlayacağım akademik rapor, makale ya da sunumlarda kullanmamın muhtemel olduğunu da burada vurgulamak isterim. Son olarak

arastirmanın Open Üniversitesi Arastırma Etikleri Komitesi tarafından onaylanmış olduğunu ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'ndan gerekli izinlerin araştırma süreci başlamadan önce alındığını bilgilerinize sunarım.

Saygılarımla,

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**Information sheet for the head teachers and educational administrators in
Turkish**

ARAŞTIRMA HAKKINDA BİLGİ

(Okul müdürleri ve eğitim yöneticileri için düzenlenmiştir)

Çalışma başlığı: Türkiye'deki ortaokullarda İngilizce öğretmenliği bağlamında öğretmen özerkliği kavramının nasıl anlaşıldığı üzerine bir araştırma

Sayın katılımcı,

İsmim Betül Khalil. Open Üniversitesi (İngiltere) Eğitim ve Dil Araştırmaları Fakültesi doctora öğrencisiyim. Doktora çalışmam İngilizce eğitimi bağlamında öğretmen özerkliği kavramının Türkiye'deki ortaokullarda nasıl algılandığı ve kullanıldığınıyla ilgili olup, sizlerden bu çalışmaya katılımınızı rica ediyorum. Çalışmada birden fazla veri toplama yöntemi kullanılacak. İlk iki yöntem döküman analizi ve anket çalışması olacak. Anket çalışması 133 İngilizce öğretmenin katılımıyla gerçekleştirilecek. Üçüncü veri toplama yöntemi olarak gözlem çalışması yapılacak. 2 İngilizce öğretmenin okul çatısı altındaki faaliyetleri 2 hafta boyunca gözlemlenecek. Bu gözlemler sırasında öğrencilerle hiç bir temas kurulmayacak. Çalışmanın son aşamasında 12 İngilizce öğretmeni, 3 okul müdürü ve 3 eğitim yöneticisiyle (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın öğretmen gelişimi yada İngilizce dili eğitimi gibi birimlerinde görev yapan kimseler) ile yüzyüze görüşmeler yapılacak. Tüm görüşmeler ses kayıt cihazına kaydedilecek ve görüşmeyi takip eden günlerde kelime kelime yazıya aktarılacak. Tüm kayıtlar bana ait sifre korumalı bir dosyada tutulacak ve eğitim görmekte olduğum üniversitenin kişisel verileri koruma ilkeleri gözönünde bulundurularak saklanacak ve imha edilecek.

Öğretmen özerkliği ile ilgili düşüncelerinizi duymayı ve okul içerisinde çeşitli alanlarda İngilizce öğretmenleri'nin ne kadar inisiyatif ve sağduyu kullanabildiğiyle, karar verme süreçlerine ne kadar dahil edildikleriyle ilgili sizlerle sohbet edebilmem için bana vakit ayırabileceğinizi ümit ediyorum.. Araştırmaya ekte bulunan onay formunu doldurarak katılabilirsiniz. Görüşleriniz benim için çok değerli ve doktora araştırmamın omurgasını oluşturacaklar. İnanıyorum ki araştırmadan elde edilecek bulgular öğretmen özerkliği konseptini Türkiye bağlamında daha iyi anlamamıza fayda sağlayacağı gibi, Türkiye'de İngilizce eğitim kalitesinin nasıl yükseltilebileceğiyle ilgili bize yeni bakış açıları sunacaktır.

Son olarak şunu belirtmek isterim ki araştırmaya katılıp katılmama kararı tamamen size ait. Katılımınızı onay formuna isminizi yazarak yada imzayla tasdikledikten sonra herhangi bir sebep belirtmeksizin bu araştırmadan dilediğiniz an çekilmekte özgürsünüz. Ancak kabul edersiniz ki bunu yapmanız toplanan verilerin anonimize süreci (kişisel verilerin araştırmadan tamamen çıkarılması) başladıktan sonra mümkün olmayacaktır. Bu süreç öncesinde de kimliğinizi ifşa edebilecek türden herhangi bir verinin tamamen gizli tutulacağını birkez daha vurgulamak istiyorum. Araştırmadan elde edilecek bulguların hazırlayacağım tezde kullanılacağını, ayrıca bunların daha sonra hazırlayacağım akademik rapor, makale yada sunumlarda kullanmamın muhtemel olduğunu da burada vurgulamak isterim. Son olarak araştırmamın Open Üniversitesi Araştırma Etikleri Komitesi tarafından onaylanmış olduğunu ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'ndan gerekli izinlerin araştırma süreci başlamadan önce alındığını bilgilerinize sunarım.

Saygılarımla,

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Appendix 9: Partial view of SPSS coded data

File Edit View Data Transform Analyze Direct Marketing Graphs Utilities Add-ons Window Help																				Visible: 34 of 34 Variables
55	gender	2	experience	3	dort	1	bes	4	alti	5	yedi	4	sekiz	5	dokuz	5	on	5	onbir	4
56		2		3		4		4		4		1		3		4		1		1
57		2		3		2		4		1		1		5		4		1		2
58		2		2		2		5		1		1		5		5		1		1
59		2		2		4		2		1		5		5		5		2		2
60		2		6		3		4		1		4		4		4		2		2
61		2		4		1		2		1		2		1		1		1		1
62		2		1		2		5		1		5		5		4		4		2
63		1		2		4		2		4		2		4		5		1		1
64		2		2		1		5		4		1		5		4		2		1
65		1		3		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1
66		2		2		3		5		1		1		2		4		2		1
67		2		2		4		3		2		4		3		4		1		1
68		2		1		1		2		1		2		2		1		2		1
69		2		2		3		5		1		2		4		4		2		1
70		2		1		2		4		3		4		4		3		2		3
71		2		5		5		5		5		5		5		5		4		5
72		2		1		4		4		2		3		4		4		4		4
73		2		5		4		2		3		5		4		4		3		4
74		2		2		1		5		1		5		5		5		2		4
75		2		2		3		4		2		4		5		4		3		2
76		1		3		4		5		1		4		4		3		1		2
77		2		3		1		2		2		3		4		3		3		3
78		2		6		5		5		5		5		5		5		5		5
79		2		1		2		5		5		5		5		4		4		4
80		2		3		4		5		1		2		4		4		1		1
81		1		1		4		5		1		5		5		5		4		5
82		2		3		2		5		4		4		5		5		4		4
83		2		5		4		5		2		2		5		5		1		1
84		2		2		4		5		4		4		4		3		5		4
85		2		2		4		5		1		3		4		4		4		2
86		1		5		2		2		3		3		3		4		2		4
87		1		3		5		4		3		1		5		5		4		4
88		2		2		2		5		1		5		4		4		2		2
89																				

Data View

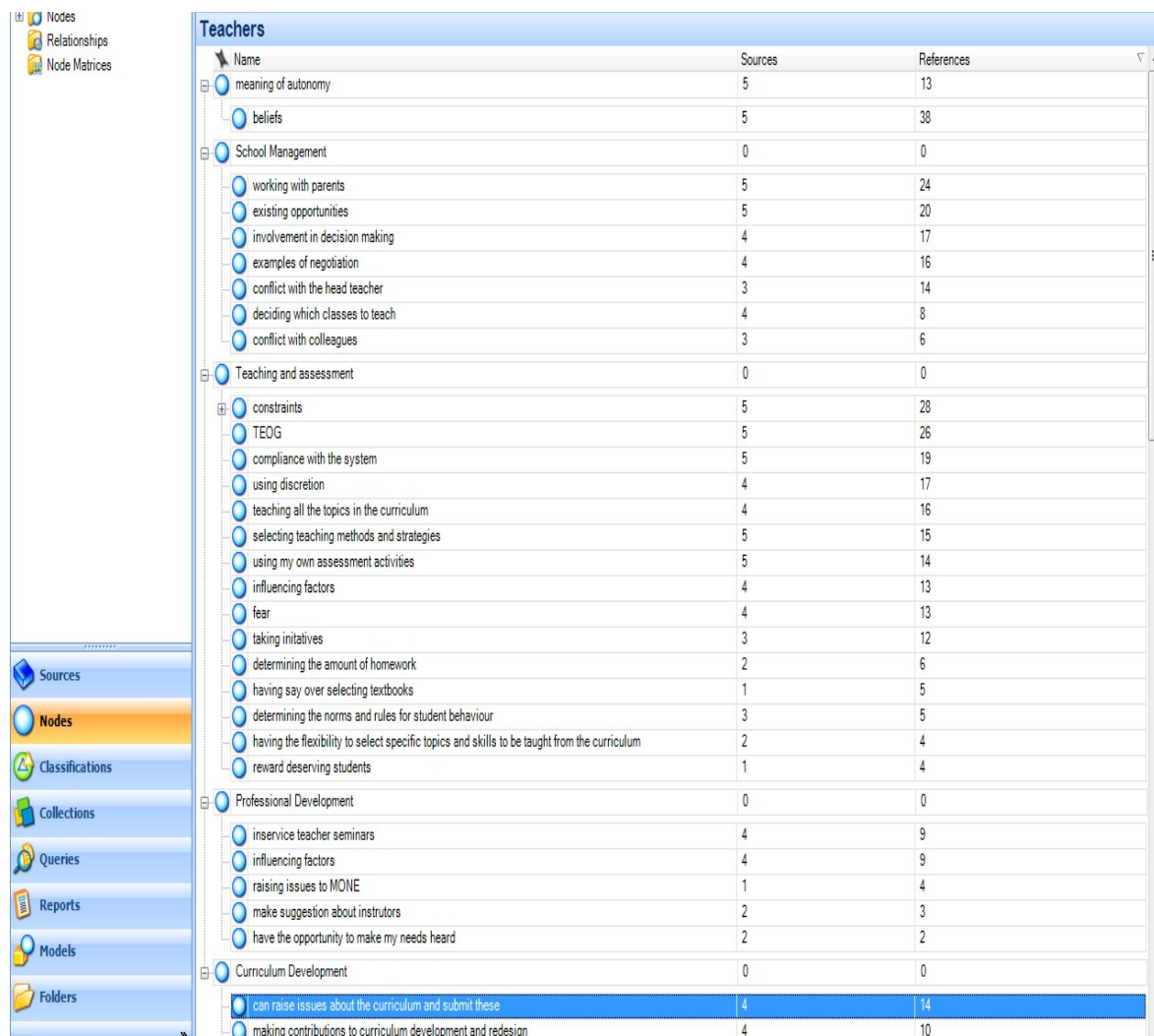
Variable View

File Edit View Data Transform Analyze Direct Marketing Graphs Utilities Add-ons Window Help														IBM SPSS Statistics Processor is ready.									
1	Youngender	Numeric	12	0	Your gender:	{1, male}...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input												
2	Yearsofexp...	Numeric	12	0	Years of experi...	{1, 0-4}...	None	11	Right	Scale	Input												
3	Gradestaught	Numeric	12	0	Grades taught:	None	None	22	Right	Nominal	Input												
4	dort	Numeric	12	0	assessment	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
5	bes	Numeric	12	0	homework	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
6	alti	Numeric	12	0	textbooks	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
7	yedi	Numeric	12	0	space	{0, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
8	sekiz	Numeric	12	0	behaviour	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
9	dokuz	Numeric	12	0	methods	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
10	on	Numeric	12	0	topics	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
11	onbir	Numeric	12	0	extra	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
12	oniki	Numeric	12	0	reward	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
13	onuc	Numeric	12	0	ownership	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
14	ondort	Numeric	12	0	budget	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
15	onbes	Numeric	12	0	spend	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
16	onalti	Numeric	12	0	scheduling	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
17	onyedi	Numeric	12	0	collaborate	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
18	onsekiz	Numeric	12	0	grouping	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
19	ondokuz	Numeric	12	0	parents	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
20	yirmi	Numeric	12	0	plan	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
21	yirmibir	Numeric	12	0	action	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
22	yirmiiki	Numeric	12	0	less	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
23	yirmiuc	Numeric	12	0	risk	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
24	yirmidort	Numeric	12	0	opportunity	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
25	yirmibes	Numeric	12	0	instructors	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
26	yirmialti	Numeric	12	0	curriculum	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
27	yirmiyedi	Numeric	12	0	contribution	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
28	yirmisekiz	Numeric	12	0	raise	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
29	yirmidokuz	Numeric	12	0	prescribed	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
30	otuz	Numeric	12	0	enrichment	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
31	otuzbir	Numeric	12	0	devising	{1, not at al}...	None	12	Right	Ordinal	Input												
32	teach	Numeric	8	2	teachs	{1 00, not at ...}	None	10	Right	Ordinal	Input												
33	school	Numeric	8	2	schools	{1 00, not at ...}	None	10	Right	Ordinal	Input												
34	prof	Numeric	8	2	profs	{1 00, not at ...}	None	10	Right	Ordinal	Input												
35	curri	Numeric	8	2	curriculum	{1 00, not at ...}	None	10	Right	Ordinal	Input												
36																							

Data View

Variable View

Appendix 10: Computer screenshot of Nvivo teacher interview open coding



Name	Sources	References
meaning of autonomy	5	13
beliefs	5	38
School Management	0	0
working with parents	5	24
existing opportunities	5	20
involvement in decision making	4	17
examples of negotiation	4	16
conflict with the head teacher	3	14
deciding which classes to teach	4	8
conflict with colleagues	3	6
Teaching and assessment	0	0
constraints	5	28
TEOG	5	26
compliance with the system	5	19
using discretion	4	17
teaching all the topics in the curriculum	4	16
selecting teaching methods and strategies	5	15
using my own assessment activities	5	14
influencing factors	4	13
fear	4	13
taking initiatives	3	12
determining the amount of homework	2	6
having say over selecting textbooks	1	5
determining the norms and rules for student behaviour	3	5
having the flexibility to select specific topics and skills to be taught from the curriculum	2	4
reward deserving students	1	4
Professional Development	0	0
inservice teacher seminars	4	9
influencing factors	4	9
raising issues to MONE	1	4
make suggestion about instructors	2	3
have the opportunity to make my needs heard	2	2
Curriculum Development	0	0
can raise issues about the curriculum and submit these	4	14
making contributions to curriculum development and redesign	4	10

Appendix 11: Sample field notes

I like playing chess. The teacher repeats the sentence several times and asks students to translate this into Turkish. She wants them to begin their translation with the subject pronoun I [Ben]. Anyone trying to do it differently and beginning the sentence with something else but 'ben' is stopped with a loud 'no'. By the way it is 10:06 and the deputy head teacher is still here trying to sort the connection problem out. (...) He has just explained to the teacher that he does not know what is wrong with the Internet connection and he cannot help. 'Can we move the pupils to one of the other classrooms upstairs for the next lesson?' He keeps quiet...

Observation with Özlem, Year 6

One of the school officers just came in and asked the teacher to sign the paper for the subject teachers meeting tomorrow (9:16 a.m.) She wants to use the Internet, but it doesn't seem to work. She suggests that they should look at the questions in the yesterday's exam and answer them together (9:20 a.m.) Break time now (9:25 a.m.) We are still in the classroom. It is students' snack time. She is checking if students are eating healthy food. I am just curious if this is her individual preference to stay and look after the students in their snack time.

Observation with Sema, Year 5

The teacher is giving the instructions in English for the activity (drawing a weekly schedule). He constantly checks understanding using 'understand?', 'OK?' Most of

the students nod their heads. Some of them are still staring at me, they are so curious what I am writing (13:20) He is reminding the students that they need to write in English, not in Turkish. He has given them 10 mins to complete the task. He seems to determine the type of the task, and the time, but told them that they are free to draw the schedule the way they want. As it happened in the other classroom, he asked one of the students to take his coat off and hang it up. (1:25 p.m)

Observation with Mehmet, Year 8

Appendix 12: Appendix of respondent quotes used in the thesis in Turkish

The respondent source codes and page numbers are provided in accordance with the Open University guidelines for use of foreign language content.

AnonymisedQ1(informal): Hakikaten bunu çok ciddiye aldım. Toplantı öncesinde mesela eski ve yeni müfredatı karşılaştırıp bir rapor hazırladım. Toplantının yapılacağı gün, bütün branş öğretmenleri ayrı ayrı sınıflarda toplandılar. Matematik, Fen bilimleri, İngilizce. Baktık kısa bir süre sonra hepsi teker teker ayrılıyor. İngilizce öğretmenleri ise tam 3 saat kalıp müfredatı tartıştık. Yaklaşık 3 saat sonra, görevli müdür geldi ne yaptığımıza bir göz attı, n'apiyorsunuz siz bu kadar falan. Sonra tuttu bize elindeki faksı gösterdi. Meğer müfredatın pozitif yönlerini değerlendirmemiz gerekiyormuş. Bir nevi eksiklerini göz ardı edeceğiz. Eksik yanlarını rapor etmemiz değil, iyi yanlarını övmemiz gerekiyormuş (p. 241)

AnonymisedQ2: Zümre toplantıları mı? Hepsi kâğıt üzerinde. Zümre başkanı hazırlar tutanağı, biz de imzalarız (p. 248).

AnonymisedQ3: Gecen gün sınav yaptım. Döküldüler. Bütün kâğıtları çöpe attım. Normalde böyle bir şey yapabilir miyim? Hayır, ama yaptım. Daha yüksek notlar almaları gerekiyordu (p. 190).

AnonymisedQ4: Bir ay sürüyor nerdeyse bunu yapmaları. Ben de ne yapıyorum? Yazıyorum notu sanki proje ödevi yapılmış her şey hallolmuş gibi (p. 210).

AnonymisedQ5: Esneklik var ama nasıl deyim? Hani bir şey olur da aile içinde kalır ya sınıf içinde kalan bir esneklik var. Onların iyi niyetine güvenmesem ya da onlar benim iyi niyetime güvenmese olmaz. Çocuklar artık 5 yıldır birbirimizi tanıyoruz.

Özellikle 8. Sınıflarla pek çok şeyi paylaştık. Velileri bile tanıyorum ne yaparlar ne yapmazlar. Onlar da beni çok iyi tanır. İyi niyetime güvenir. Ama veli dese Hoca performans ödevi vermedi benim çocuğuma benim çocuğum şunu yapmadı, hoca nerden verdi bu notu dese tabi ki de benim cevap veremeyeceğim çok şey var. Bunlar esneklik hakkım olduğu için yapmıyorum bunları. Yasadışı. Hakkım olmadan yapıyorum (gülerek) ama yapıyorum. Öbür türlü zaten robot öğretmen oluruz zaten ya gerçekten (p. 190).

AnonymisedQ6: Müdürü dinlemeyip raporu göndersek bile bunu ilk denetmenler okur. İstedikleri şekilde yazılmadığı için rapor, zaten elerler. Dikkate almazlar ki raporu. Boşa gider (p. 242).

Mq1: Öğretmenler olarak mekanik bir varlıkla değil tamamen etten kemikten ve ruhtan oluşan varlıklarla uğraşıyoruz. Çocuğun psikolojik ya da duygusal ruh hali çoğu zaman benim vereceğimi dersi, hangi konunun üstüne daha çok düşüp hangisi atlayabileceğimi belirleyebiliyor. Ne kadar planlarsak planlayalım (örnek veriyordum) size yani o gün çocuğun arkadaşıyla tartışması, kalemini en sevdiği eşyasını kaybetmesi, sınıfta çok ciddi bir olayın olması onların psikolojisinden onların gözünden ciddi bir olayın çıkması sizin dersinizi o çocukların o çözülmemiş problemini çözülmeden bırakırsanız onların öğrenme performansını son derece etkiliyor (p. 191).

Mq2: Bu durum ister istemez velilerin baskısını da beraberinde getiriyor. Çünkü okul idaresinin performansı o sınavda kaç öğrencinin başarılı olduğu, kaç kişinin bir sonraki adıma geçip geçemediği ile ilgili değerlendiriliyor. Öğretmenin başarısı da neyi ne kadar öğrettiğiyle değil sınavı kaç kişinin geçip geçemediğiyle ilgilendiriliyor. Ve öğrenci velileri de bu kritere göre eğer çocukları başarısız olursa kusuru yine

öğretmende arıyorlar (p. 212).

Mq3: Yani aslında müfredat, samimi bir cevap, istiyorsanız hiç bir okulda hiç bir öğretmen tarafından zamanında ve düzgün bir şekilde bitmiyor. Yani bitmiş gibi yapılıyor. Yani onun dediği zamanda konular uymuyor ama aslında genel hatlarıyla çok fazla üzerine düşmeden, konuları detaylı incelemeden o müfredat büyük bir oranda zamanında bitiyor. Ama buradaki sorun o müfredattaki konuların öğrenci tarafından ne kadar öğrenilip öğrenilmediği (p. 245).

Mq4: Bir defa biz eğitim programının içeriğine karar vermemiz bizim mümkün değil, o bize yukardan dikte ediliyor. Herhangi bir derste kullanılacak araç gerece karar vermemiz mümkün değil o da bizim adımıza belirlenmiş oluyor. Yalnızca zümre toplantılarında ödev konularını, bu ödevlerin nasıl değerlendirileceğini, kaç tane ödev verileceğini, en az kaç tane yazılı sınav değerlendirilecek. Bu kadar. Yani çünkü konuşulan konular alınacak kararlar her zaman yaptığımız şeyler olduğu için bunun dışına çıkılmadığı için tartışıp fikir üretmek yapacak bir şey de yok ve alınacak ekstra bir karar da yok yani (p. 233).

Mq6: Eğitim programı son derece ayrıntılı ve fazla sayıda konudan oluşuyor. Ve öğrencilerin daha doğrusu bu soruyu biraz şöyle detaylandırayım. MEB'e ait okullardaki sınıflarda hiç bir zaman homojen birbirine eşit sayıdaki çocuklardan oluşmuyor. (Tamamen rastgele oluşturulmuş rastgele bir araya gelmiş) çok çeşitli sosyo-ekonomik alt gruplara mensup öğrencilerden oluşuyor. Dolayısıyla bu kadar ayrıntılı herkese hitap edecek bir müfredat yerine sadece temel çizgileri belirlenmiş, gerisinin öğretmene bırakıldığı bir müfredat olsa daha iyi olurdu. Yani özellikle konuların süreleri (p.243).

Mq9: Değiştirildiğini bilmiyordum ki. Görüyorsunuz kimse de bana bir şey söylemedi. Simdi ben suçlu oluyorum (p. 225).

Mq10: Alttan almam lazım bazı şeyleri. Onlar da Cuma'yı boşaltıyorlar (p. 226)

Dq1a: Şurada çocuk ağlıyor mesela yâda bir önceki derste azar işitmişler suratlar fena asık. Sen çocuğum orda ağla deyip derse devam mı edeyim. O durumda yani kaldırın hadi defteri kitabı şunu halledelim oluyor (p.191).

Dq1b: Milli Eğitim sınavı Çankaya'da hazırlıyor. Ankara'nın en gözde semti. Bense buranın ne en gözde semtinde oturuyorum ne de en gözde okulunda çalışıyorum. O yüzden normal olarak benim hazırladığım yazılılar da öğrencilerimin seviyelerine göre (p. 209).

Dq2: Kâğıdı okurken de atıyorum mesela öğrencimin geçen hafta, okulun kapandığı hafta dedesi vefat etti. Ve o hafta İngilizce sınavı var 1 gün sonra. O çocuk o sınavda ne yapabilir? Bir gün önce dersten apar topar götürüldü ve 1 gün sonrada rapor alıp telafi sınavına girme ihtimali olmadığı için okul kapanacak apar topar sınavına girdi. Ben ona göre o öğrencinin performans ödevini proje notunu ona göre tuttum. Durumu dengelemem gerekiyordur. Ama Ankara'daki soruyu hazırlayan bunları bilmiyor (p.209)

Dq4: Bana 10 tane fiil vermişler bugün. Bana 10 tane fiili öğret. Yöntem teknik vermiyor. Ben neyle öğrettim? Bahçeye çıkarıp topla öğrettim. Bu kadar. Bunun haricinde yok. Bir öğretmen olarak öğretme teknikleri metotları, stratejileri ile ilgili esneklik hakkım var (p. 205).

Dq5: Hamileyim. 3 ay derse gelmedim ya. 3 ay derse gelmeyen bir öğretmen o müfredatı nasıl yetiştirebilir? Ben de yazdım doğum öncesi ve doğum sonrası

izinlerimde derslerin boş geçmiş olmasından dolayı... Müdür dedi sen bizim başımızı belaya mı sokacaksın. Ne demek ben ders boş geçmiş dedirtmem. Ben öğretmen istedim vermediler dedi. Tamam dedim ben hemen değiştiririm. O gün bugündür yetiştiriyorum [gülerek] (p. 245).

Dq6: Lafta komite hepsi. Bizim için ekstra kâğıt isinden başka bir şey değil. Üyeler bir araya gelip bir şeyler üzerinde çalışmaz bile. Yani bir araya gelirler ama iste bir şeyler imzalamak için. Kararlar zaten çok çoktan alınmıştır, bunlar da o kararların altına imza atarlar (p. 221).

Dq6a: Defter nerde bilmiyorum bir defterimiz var bizim. Alım satım komisyonu, kantin denetleme komisyonu, öğrenci başarısını artırma komisyonu, öğrenci davranışlarını düzenleme komisyonu. Muhteşem komisyonlarımız var bizim. Ama hepsi imza komisyonudur bunun. Öğretmenler bu komisyonlarda görevlendirilir, sonra da önceden hazırlanmış dokümanların altına imza atmaktan başka bir şey yapmazlar (p. 221).

Dq7: Ders saatleri hakkında söz hakkımız var ama nasıl olur bu mesela biz teklif ederiz, idare de uygun görüyorsa kabul eder. Ve diğer branş arkadaşlarımız da sesini çıkarmıyorsa, onlar da onaylıyorsa tamam. Ama arkadaşlar istemezlerse sorun çıkaracak şekilde istemezlerse ya da ders programı oturmazsa yerine olmaz (p. 224).

Dq8a: Bugün dersim varsa beni okulda bulursun, yoksa evdeyimdir. Ders programımız aslına bakarsan kimin okulda olup olmayacağını belirliyor. Ders programımıza göre birbirimizi öğretmenler odasında 10 dakikalığına ya görüyoruz ya görmüyoruz (p. 232).

Dq8b: Bir öğretmen arkadaşımın su toplantı raporunu imzalaması gerekiyor [önündeki dosyayı açtı raporu göstermek için]. Tam üç gündür adamı bulamıyorum ya. Birlikte çalışmıyoruz ki. Yok öyle bir şey (p. 232).

Dq9: Herkes dersten sonra evine gider o yüzden biraz da birlik içinde beraberce çalışmıyoruz. Bir de ne derler? Çatlak ses çıkarmak istemediğimiz için olmuyor. Nasıl çatlak ses çıkarmak istemiyoruz? Diyorum ki ben mesela madem böyle bir komisyon var, 5 kişi toplanalım şunu yapalım. O zaman biz okulda yatıp kalkalım. Bu iş burada bitmez. Şimdi şöyle de bir şey var. Tembel de milletiz. Tabi ki (p. 232).

Dq10: Her yıl bir seminere gönderiliyoruz iste. Genelde bu gözde bir okulda olur. Hızlı konuşma teknikleriydi en son mesela, yani sınıfta İngilizce konuşuyoruz sanki de biz onu hızlandıracağız. Okuduğunu anlama semineri, gaydırı gubbak seminerler vardır böyle bizim. Onlardan birine bir hafta gidiyoruz biz. Onlardan birini seçmiyoruz, birileri bizi o seminere gitmemiz için seçmiştir zaten. Onlardan birine bir hafta gidiyoruz biz. Orda bir iki saat ders görürüz. Hafta biter. Elimize bir belge verirler. Hızlı konuşma teknikleri seminerini arkadaş başarıyla tamamlamıştır diye. Bunu da dosyamıza koyar yolumuza devam ederiz (p. 236).

Dq11: Comenius projesi yaptım mesela. İtalya, İspanya, Yunanistan Türkiye (sessizlik) Gidemedim ama. Benim oğlum otizmli. O yüzden gidemedim. Projede öyle kaldı iste, endişelerim vardı (p. 239).

Dq12: Müfredat sürecine kesinlikle dâhil edilmiyoruz. Ankara'da hazırlanır müfredat. MEB bünyesinde Talim Terbiye diye bir kurul vardır. Orada o müfredatı kim hazırlıyor ben de bilmiyorum hiç bir fikrim yok. Bunlar İngilizce öğretmeni mi, öğretim görevlisi mi, üniversite hocası mı? Bilmiyorum (p. 240).

Dq13: 4'te çok basit bir İngilizce gösteriyoruz çocuklara. Çok çok basit ama yani 3 saat dersimiz var. Güzel de gidiyor ders. Hem oyun oynayabiliyoruz, hem projeksiyondan çizgi filmlerle öğretebiliyoruz. Onun üzerine 5. Sınıf birdenbire derse giriş yapıyoruz. Çocuğa ağır geliyor. 4'ten sonra 5. Sınıf oldukça ağır geliyor. Sonra 5. Sınıf belli bir yerde bitiyor. Sınıf yine simple present tense'den başlıyor. Bunların farkındayız biz bu eksikliklerin, tutarsızlıkların ama Milli Eğitim maalesef değil gibi görünüyor (p. 243).

Dq14: Raporların okunduğundan hiç sanmıyorum. Hiç umudumuz yok yani ama n'apalım yine de yazıyoruz (p. 247).

Dq15: Valla toplanıp muhabbet ediyoruz. Aynı okuldansak eski hocalardan, arkadaşlardan, eski sevgililerden (gülüşmeler). Başka da bir şey yapmıyoruz (gülerek) (p. 247).

Dq16: 30 tane öğretmen var bu okulda. Hepsi özerkliğini ilan edip bireysel olarak çalışmaya kalksa nasıl olurdu hiç bir fikrim yok. Nasıl bir kargaşa yazardık. Biz bu şekilde yetiştirilmedik ki; özerk olarak yetiştirilmedik (p. 193).

Dq17: Milli Eğitim'in Morpha Kampüsle anlaşması var. Kısa videolar, çizgi filmler, şarkılar. Hepsi milli eğitimin merceği altında. Valla risk almıyorum. Niye aliyim ki zaten? (p. 203).

Gq1: İngilizce öğretmeni olmaktan çok çocuklara hayatı anlatma derdindeyim. Çünkü yaşadıkları yer insanların kafalarının daha ağır oldukları, ailelerinden baskı gördükleri, dünyalarının farklılaşması ihtiyacı içindeki çocuklar yani. Farklı pencereler lazım onlara. İngilizce onların önceliği değil yani öyle söyleyeyim. Hayatta kalmaları yaşamaları için farklılıklar görmeye, aa böyle insanlar da varmış

demeye ihtiyaları var. Bunun iin de ben de... ğretmenlik. Birisi iin bir ışıık olmakmıř. Ki ok gzel bir řey bu (p. 192).

Gq2: Bir ğrenciye İngilizce ğretmen deėildi amacım. Daha doėrusu nceliėim deėildi. Tabi ki bu řeyle yola ıktım ama bir ğrencinin hayata bakıř aısını yenileyebilmek hayatına farklılık katabilmek anlamında ok tatmin olduėum zamanlar oldu. Yani kendimi ok iyi hissettiėim zamanlar oldu (p. 192).

Gq3: Ders programı ile ilgili de problemim vardı. Mdrle bunu konuřmak iin odasına gittim. Gittim odasına syledim tel tedavim var haftada bir gne ihtiyacım var, ders programım da az 19 saat azaltılabileceėini syledim. Gzelce aıkladım bunu mdre. Yapmayacaėını syledi, byle bir řeyi hi kimseye yapmadıėını syledi (p. 226).

Gq4: Kendisi de zaten seviyor akıl vermeyi nasihat etmeyi btn yařlı mdrler gibi. İřte senle hayatımız uygun deėil, hayat grřlerimiz dnya grřlerimiz farklı falan diye konuya girdi ama onun dıřında řyle alıřmadıėımı iddia etti. Derse girip ıkıyorum ama onun dıřında sosyal bir etkinlikte bulunmuyorum gibi řeyler iddia etti (p. 226).

Gq5: Komitelerde kimin ne yapacaėına mdr bey karar verir, ama sonuta ğretmenin de onay vermesi lazım, ya da daha doėru bir ifadeyle; karsı ıkmaması gerekir (p. 222).

Gq6: Mdr beyin nceden inisiyatifini kullandıėını, bazı arkadaşların okula her gn gelmediėini biliyordum (p. 226).

Gq7: Bir ka kez mesela tahrik ve taciz edici kıyafetler giyilmesini istemediėini syledi. Bu hakikaten benim midemi bulandırdı (p. 227).

Hq1: Özerklik temelde öğretmenlerin meslekleriyle ilgili konularda bir özgürlük alanına sahip olmasıdır. Bizim eskiden bize öğretmenlerimiz derdi ki sınıf cumhurbaşkanının bile karışamayacağı yerdir öğretmenliğin sınıf alanı. Hatta Mustafa Kemal Atatürk anlatılır ki öğretmenin sınıfına girerken kapıyı tıklatarak girmiştir. Sınıf içerisinde öğretmen serbest ama onun da uyacağı bir kurallar var (p. 194).

Hq2: İngilizce öğretmeni ders anlatış şekli, not veriş öğretmenlerle öğrencilerle ders anlatışı, diğerleriyle iletişimi konusunda özgürdür. Ama okul müdürünün incelemesine tabidir. Nasıl inceler yani girişine ve çıkışına dikkat eder. Yani derse zamanında mı girmiş zamanında mı çıkmış. Ve diğer sınıfları zarar veriyor mu mesela. Şunu da öğretmen dikkat eder. Sınıfta gürültü de yaptırmayacak. Özerklik var ama bu diğer sınıflardaki derslere engel olmamalı (p. 195).

Hq3: Öğretmen hazırlanmış müfredata uyacak tatbiki de, ama derslerini daha etkili hale getirmek de onların ellerinde. Öğretmen inisiyatif kullanabilir. Müfredata uyacak ama müfredat olayı olmasa da o zaman birbirleriyle İngilizce öğretmeni zümrelerinin birbirleriyle nasıl aynı anda gidebilecekler? Bazısı farklı bir müfredat uygulayacak bazısı farklı bir müfredat uygulayacak. O zaman çok karışık bir ortaya bir şey çıkar. Kaos olur (p. 215).

Hq4: Şimdi ben bir kere şahit değilim müfredatı yetiştiremediğinden dolayı soruşturma açılan öğretmene. Öğretmen müfredatı yetiştiremiyorsa mutlaka bir açıklaması vardır. Raporu vardır bir sıkıntısı vardır. Bile bile müfredatı yetiştiremeyen bir öğretmene ben hiç şahit olmadım. Böyle bir sıkıntı varsa soruşturma olabilir ama ben hiç şahit olmadım. Şimdi müfredatı yetiştiremediği zaman telafi günleri olur. Hafta sonları gerekirse telafi dersleri yapılabilir (p. 245).

Hq5: Şimdi bir kere öğretmenler kurulu vardır. Öğretmenler kurulu tüm öğretmenlerin okul müdürü başkanlığında toplanmış olduğu bir meclis kurulu toplantısıdır. Buradaki olan alınan kararlar eğer anayasal sıkıntısı olmadıktan sonra her türlü şekilde uygulanır. Oy çokluğuyla alındığı zaman uygulanır. Şimdi buradaki olayda öğretmenler yönetime bizzat dâhildir sürece. Yani okul müdürüne bir teklifte bulunur öğretmen. Bu da gösteriyor ki öğretmenin bizzat yönetime dâhil edildiğini gösteriyor (p. 230).

Hq6: Öğretmenler de onları istediği takdirde açılabilir. Hatta biz ilçe olarak bile bizden 20 kişilik bir ekip gelip de ben hızlı okuma teknikleri semineri almak istiyorum, drama semineri almak istiyorum derse biz onlara o tür seminer hizmeti verebiliyoruz tabi sıkıntı yok.(...) Ama böyle bir şeye rastlamadım henüz (p. 235).

Hq7: Öğretmenler böyle bir açlık duymuyorlar ki. Eğitim sistemimizde bir suru aksaklıklar olabilir ama bunda İngilizce öğretmenlerinin payı da var. Öğrenci ben nasılsa üniversiteyi kazandım artık kesin ben de öğretmen olacağım diyor, keyfine bakıyor. Kendini yenilemiyor, kendini geliştirecek yeni arayışlara girmiyor (p. 237).

Hq8: Son çıkan 6528 sayılı kanunla artık öğretmenler kendi stajyerliği kalkmadan ve ya stajyerliği kalkabilmesi için mülakattan geçecekler kendi alanlarıyla ilgili. Bunlar bence iyi şeyler en azından İngilizce öğretmeni nasılsa öğretmen oldum devlete kapağı attım –amiyane tabirle- ben rahatım deyip yan gelip yatmayacak. Durağanlaşmayacak. Her zaman dinamikliğini koruyacak (p. 237).

Hq9: Aksi takdirde dinimize, gelenek ve göreneklerimize, ülkemize karşı karalayıcı ifadeler devletin radarından kaçabilir. İşte bu yüzden herkesin her istediği kitabı sınıfta kullanmamasına izin veremeyiz. Tüm kitaplar hükümet tarafından mercek

altına alınıp denetlenmeli. Bir kere kitaplar anayasaya uygun olmak zorunda (p. 198).

Hq10: Görev almak isteyen öğretmenlerden en az beş yıllık öğretmenlik tecrübesi istenir. Başvuru direkt olarak Talim ve Terbiye 'ye yapılır. Başvurusu kabul edilen öğretmenler o gün yaklaşık 12-13 saat olmak üzere çalışmak üzere davet edilir. Öğretmenler buraya ulaşana kadar hangi kitabı inceleyeceklerini bilmemeleri şart. Gün sonunda bir rapor yazılır, değerlendirme yapılır. Sunulan görüşlere göre kitap geçer veya kalır (p. 199).

Hq11: İnceleme sürecinde görev alan öğretmenlere panelist denir. Komisyon 8 kişiden oluşur. İngilizce kitaplarını incelemek için mesela 4 İngilizce öğretmenin katılımı gerekiyor (p. 199).

Uq1: Çünkü öğretmen problemle sınıfta yüz yüze olan kişidir karşılaşan kişidir. O Yüzden o öğrencilerin çevresinin problemlerini en iyi o öğretmen biliyor. Bu noktada bir öğretmenin bazı kararlar alması kaçınılmazdır. Bu noktada öğretmenleri tamamen müfredata bağlı tamamen gelen emir ve yasaklara bağlı bir halde bırakırsanız orda ders işleyiş süreçleri sekteye uğrayacaktır. Öğretmenin test kitabı almasını yasaklarsanız, öğretmen kaynaklara erişimini kısıtlarsanız zaten ülkemizin fiziki imkânları maddi imkânları belirli. Bazı şeylere öğrencilerimiz ulaşamıyor yani biz de ulaşamıyoruz. Bu noktada da yasaklamalar öğretmeni belirli bir çerçevenin içine hapsetmen eğitim öğretim ortamını bence olumsuz etkiliyor. Öğretmenlerin biraz daha özgür olmaları ama denetimli özgürlük olmasını kastediyorum. Ben denetimsiz özgürlüğe karşıyım. Belli bir noktada denetimli özgürlüğe sahip olmalarının çok doğru olacağını düşünüyorum (p. 195).

Uq2: Çünkü bugün Türkiye'de test kitabını yayınlayan yayınevleri genellikle bir

merkeze bağılı. Şuanda o merkezle ilgili o hareketle ilgili sıkıntılar olduğu için onların para kaynaklarını maddi kaynaklarını kesmek noktasında böyle bir durum söz konusu. Bu da haliyle sınıflara yansıyor, öğretmene yansıyor, öğrencilerin benzer soru içerikleri olan sınava hazırlanışına yansıyor (p. 202).

Uq3a: Bu hissettikleri baskıdan dolayı, şimdi bütün öğretmenler en iyi en gözde sınıflara girmek istiyorlar. Bu da öğretmenler odasındaki dinamikleri değiştirdiği gibi, normal şartlarda iyi geçinen aralarında problem olmayan meslektaşlarımızı olumsuz yönde etkiliyor (p. 213).

Uq3b: Zümre öğretmenleri arasında bundan kaynaklanan problemleri duyuyoruz. Kötü sınıfı bana verdiler, iyi sınıfı kendileri aldılar gibi şeyler olabiliyor ama yani genel sorunlara baktığımız zaman ben çok detay çok önemsiz görüyorum ben bunu. Bu noktada yapılması gereken öğretmeni şu ikilemden kurtarmak önemli. Biz İngilizce öğretmeni olarak İngilizce mi öğreteceğiz yoksa merkez tarafından belirlenmiş geçerliliği ne derece doğru bilemediğimiz sınavlarda öğrencinin başarılı olmasını mı sağlayacağız? Öğrenciler hep test çözdürmek için mi İngilizce öğretiyoruz yoksa konuşmalarını sağlamak için mi öğretiyoruz. Burada bir ikilem yaşıyoruz. Bunu artık bir açıklığa kavuşmasını istiyoruz (p. 214).

Uq4: Bir öğretmen olarak, İngilizce öğretmeni olarak, müfredatı birebir uygulamak zorundasın resmi olarak. Yani yıl sonunda müfredatın bitirilip bitirilmediğiyle ilgili yazılı dilekçe veriyoruz biz. tutanak tutuyoruz. Müfredatı bitirmek gibi resmi bir sorumluluğumuz var (...) Biz yılsonunda tutanak tutarız. Girdiğimiz sınıflarda müfredat eksikse tamamlandı diye yazarız. Bunu okulda 80 öğretmen varsa 80’i de yazar, fakat bu 80 öğretmenden çoğu bunu bitirmemiştir. Bitirememiştir (vurgulu) daha doğrusu ama yazmak zorunda olduğumuz için

yazarız biz öğrenciye yalan söylemeyin darken biz kendimiz burada yalan söylemek durumunda zorunda (vurgulu) kalıyoruz. Bırakıyoruz (p. 245).

Uq5: Doğrudur tamamen yöneticinin inisiyatifıyla alakalı, hayata bakışı ve dünya görüşüyle alakalı. Bazı okullarda katı disiplin mevcutken bazı okullarda daha demokratik bir anlayış söz konusu (...)Demokratik bir okul kültürü varsa öğretmenler okul yönetimine katılabiliyorlar. Ama yoksa böyle bir şey öğretmenler katılamıyor. Sadece okul idaresinin yakın olduğu, kişisel muhabbetlerinin olduğu kimseler dar bir çerçevede katılabiliyor yönetime (p. 221)

Uq6: Çoğu okulda, ... Demokratik olmaktan çok daha çok baskıcı ve otoriterler. O yüzden bu komisyonlara kurullara katılırken biz çok fazla inisiyatif kullanamıyoruz genel anlamda söylüyorum yani. Kurullar ve komisyonları, mudur ayarlayıp daha sonra öğretmenler odasında panoda duyuruyor. Bu yüzden de bu komisyonlar maalesef doğru işlemiyor (p. 222).

Uq7: Tabi çalıştaylara İngilizce öğretmenleri davet ediliyor. Fakat bu öğretmeneler hangi kriterlere göre oraya gidiyor? Bunu biz bilemiyoruz yani. Ben çalıştığım okullarda bu sürece dâhil edilme sürecinde bir şey gelmedi bana. Rastlanmadım. Birçok yazı gelir bize işte şu vardır bu vardır diye fakat müfredat belirleme çalışmalarına katılın ya da en azından fikrinizi belirtebileceğiniz bir form doldurun gibi bir şey gelmedi. Daha önceden şu geliyordu. Ders kitaplarının eleştirisi konusunda form geliyordu. Memnun musunuz? Sizce neler olmalı gibi? Formal oluyordu (p. 240).

Uq8: Nerede depolandığını bizzat bildiğim için yani o konuda net şeyler söyleyebilirim. O tutanaklar ilçe Milli eğitim Müdürlüklerinde toplanır, bir klasöre koyulur ve daha sonra İl Milli eğitim Müdürlüklerine gönderilir. İl Milli eğitim

müdürlüklerinde her bölüme ayrı ayrı koyulur. İmam hatip ortaokullarından gelen din eğitimi mesela bir klasöre gelir, ilköğretim kurumlarımdan olanlar bir klasöre gelir. Bunlar stratejik planlamaya gönderilir bazen, bazen başka birimlere gönderilir. İncelenmesi istenir ama yani bu konuda detaylı bir rapor inceliş de bakanlığa gönderilmez. Orda kalır. Bakanlık eğer Bakanlık bir emir işte bunlar incelenir, mevcut sorunları gönderin derse gönderilir. Ve bu şekilde gönderildiğinde de bakanlıktan bir geri dönüş olmuyor. Kendi aralarında belki değerlendiriyorlar ama (gölüyor) biz bunu değerlendirdik şöyle çözüm yolları ürettik gibi bir şey gelmiyor (p. 249).

Sq1: Ders kitapları öğrencilerin seviyesinin çok üstünde. Mudur beyle konuştuk bunu. İlçede diğer müdürlerle ve ilçe millî eğitimle katılacağı bir toplantı öncesine denk geldi bu konuşmamız. Mudur bey bu toplantıdan bir kaynakla dondu. İlçe milli eğitim tarafından verilmiş. Ders kitabının basitleştirilmiş hali. (Sınıfta kullandım ben bunu ama bu sefer de sınavda mesela renklerle ilgili sorular geldi. Benim kullandığım kaynak bu konuyu işlemiyordu mesela) (p. 200).

Sq2: Benim hiç öyle bir şeyim olmadı ama yazılı kâğıtlarını incelerken çok da böyle kötümser davranamıyorum. Hadi üç-beş aşağı derken bir iki puan da çocukların benim inisiyatifime bağlı olarak çocukları az da olsa hani şişirme diyebiliriz ama biliyorum ki bu çocukların TEOG hedefi yok. TEOG hedefi olsaydı belki biraz daha objektif davranabilirdim (p. 209).

Sq3: TEOG sınavındaki sınıftaki öğrencilerin başarısı çok düşük olduğu için bize uygulamamız gereken teknik konusunda bazı yazılar gönderdiler bize.

Sq4: Sınıf paylaşımı konusu öğretmenlere bıraktı idare. 8'leri eşit bir şekilde paylaşımından bahsettim ama 8'leri bana vermek istediler arkadaşlar. Birbirimizi çok

üzdük. Biz bir karara varamayınca anlaşılamayınca da idareye müdüre gittik. Müdür bey ben yaparım dedi. Sınıf paylaşımını yaparım, ders programını yaparım ama sizin istediğiniz gibi olmaz, çok dağınık bir şekilde yaparız. Fakat siz kendi aranızda anlaşırsanız programı da sizin düzeninize göre ayarlarız dedi. En sonunda sınıflar eşit olarak aramızda dağıtıldı (p. 214)

Sq5: Direkt ya da bireysel olarak sesini duyurma diye bir şey söz konusu değil. Toplantı sonunda rapor tutarız bu raporlar da milli eğitimin ilçe müdürlüklerine gider (p. 246).

Sq6: Öğretmen (Ö) : Kitaplık kırık.

Müdür Yardımcısı (MY): Tamam.

Ö: Bir de projeksiyondan dolayı geliyorum hep ama (mahcup bir şekilde) çalışmıyor.

MY: Yapılması gerekiyor. Başka bir şey yapamam, lambasının değişmesi gerekiyor.

Ö: Projeksiyonu açmam gerekiyor, sınıf değişikliği yapamaz mıyız? (Bir sonraki dersi için öğrencilerin sınıfını değiştirip değiştiremeyeceğini soruyor)

MY: Boş sınıf yok.

Ö: Daha önce taşıdık öğrencileri ama

MY: Bir eleman çağırıp projeksiyona baktırayım.

Ö: Bir de dolabı not etseniz.

MY: tamam.

(p. 204)

Sq7: İstek ve önerilerimizi Milli Eğitim'e göndermeyi isin asli hiç düşünmedim.

Bizden böyle bir şey talep edildiğine de hiç şahit olmadım. Hem kendim hem de diğer öğretmen arkadaşlarım için konuşuyorum. Bir dönüt alacağımızı bilsek farklı

seminerler talep edebilirdik [örnek veriliyor], ama dönüt verilmiyor ki. Keşke verilseydi. Olumlu ya da olumsuz, herhangi bir yanıt verilse! (p. 236)

Sq8: 20 yıllık öğretmenlik hayatımda bir kez bile bu surece dâhil olmadım, davet edileni de katılanı da duymadım (p. 239).

Sq9: Bir dönüt alamadığımızda, cevap alamadığımızda, önemsenmediğimizi kısmen de olsa hissediyorum. Fakat bir verimlilik olsun bizden fazlasıyla isteniyor. TEOG'da başarılı olmamız mesela. Ama sıra bizim istek ve şikâyetlerimize gelince tüm kulaklar nedense birden bire tıkanıyor (p. 247)

Sq10: İyi bir öğretmen kendini profesyonel anlamda geliştirmeli, yetersiz bilgilerle devam etmemeli (p. 192).

Sq11: Bir öğretmen olarak önemsendiğimi, değer gördüğümü düşünürdüm (p. 242).

Sq12: Yılsonunda ilçede toplandığımızda biz yine rapor yazarız. Yılsonu raporu. Haftalık ders saati mesela 6. Sınıflar için 4 saatten 3 saate düşürüldü. Saat düşürüldü ama başka herhangi bir değişiklik yapılmadı. Ders kitapları aynı, müfredat aynı. Kitabı zamanında bitiremiyoruz ki (p. 246).

DEq2: Teog bir göstergedir. İlçe milli eğitimin web sayfasında bile teogla ilgili sonuçlar yayınlanır. Basari göstermiş olan çocuklar web sayfamızda yayınladık. Okullar için bu tabi ki çok önemli. Çocuk mesela 10 soruda 4 doğru cevap vermişse tabi gözler hemen İngilizce öğretmenine çevriliyor (p. 212)

DEq3: Öğretmenler okulda öğrendikleriyle gördüğü şartları kıyaslayıp ona uygun bir şekilde bir yöntem model geliştirip çalışması lazım (p. 205).

DEq4: normal yapılması gerekenleri yapıyor onun üstüne çıkmıyor. Ne alta iniyor ne üste çıkıyor. Bu da okuluna idarecisine göre değişiyor. Öğretmenlerin kendi kişisel tercihlerine göre değişiyor. Bazı öğretmen bunlar için gayrette bulunurken aynı okul içinde bir başka öğretmen yapmıyor (p. 205).

Oq1: Kesinlikle test kitabı almak aldırma yasak. Bunun için ben imza attım dönem başında. Kesinlikle (vurgulu) aldırılmayacakmış. Gönderdikleri ders kitaplarında kullanmamız gerekiyor. Sınav test usulü ama test kitabı kullanamıyoruz. (Bunu ne amaçla yaptıklarını bilmiyorum. Ama altta başka şeyler olduğunu düşünüyorum işin aslı.) Kesinlikle test kitabı aldırıyoruz. Bununla ilgili çok soruşturma yiyen arkadaşım oldu. (Bundan dolayı ben yoruldum artık böyle şeylerle uğraşmaktan ve ben de bu sene aldırmadım ve aldırma da düşünmüyorum) (p. 201).

Oq2: Mesela ben kelime öğretirken yazma metodunu kullanıyorum. Evde öğrencilerime yazması gerektiğini söylüyorum öğrendiğimiz kelimeleri ve velilerden bunula ilgili tepki alıyorum. Bu benim bu konuda örnek olarak özerkliğime vurulan bir kettir bana göre. (Velilere gelip neden yazdıklarını ya da neden bu kadar çok yazdıklarını vs. gibi sorulara maruz kalıyorum ve yani bunu şöyle açıklıyorum; bu benim mesleki alanım bu benim mesleki yeterliliğim öğrencilerin nasıl öğrenmesi gerektiğini nasıl daha iyi öğreneceklerini velilerden daha iyi bildiğimi ve bunu bu şekilde kendilerine güzel bir dille açıklıyorum fakat her konuda olduğu gibi bu alanda da sürekli mesleki olarak velilerden diğer eğitimci arkadaşlardan ya da müdürümüzden olsun çeşitli konularda baskı altında tutuluyoruz.) Yani baskıya bir noktaya kadar çıkıyorsun sonra müdür bey olsun diğer idareciler olsun bir üst amirin oldukları için çeşitli yaptırımlar uyguladıkları için (p. 206)

Oq3: Ben okula velilerden bir suru şikâyet aldım ama bu hatta (147) henüz şikâyet edilmedim Allah'a şükür ama şikâyet edilmem yakındır diye düşünüyorum çünkü hemen hemen herkesi şikâyet ediyorlar ve çok çabuk bunu veliler çok fazla suiistimal etmiş durumda şuan. Ufacık bir şeye kafaları takıldı mı ufacık bir şeye canları sıkıldı mı kişisel bir zıtlasma bile olsa gidip direkt bu hattı aradıklarında müfettişler sorgusuz sualsiz okula gelip senin hakkında soruşturma açıyorlar (p. 206).

Oq4: Bunları da hazırlayan öğretmenler aslında ama neye göre hazırlıyorlar, nerde yaşıyorlar ben kesinlikle anlamış değilim. Çok ağır konulardan çok tuhaf konular seçiyorlar. Mesela en basiti 8'lerde beyin fonksiyonları sağ beyin sol beyin, çoklu zekâ kuramı. Çocuk daha bunun Türkçelerini bilmezken direkt dalıp İngilizce 'sinden başlaması ve o ağır kelimeler çocuğu çok zorluyor ve soğutuyor İngilizce 'ye karşı. Daha basit, daha ilgici daha güncel konular olabilir. Öğretmenler dâhil edilebilseydi keşke bu sure (p. 242)

Oq5: Çok fazla tutanakları da okuduklarını sanmıyorum işin aslı. Yani biraz formalite gereği bize tutturuyorlar gibi geliyor. Sanki boşu boşuna oturup konuşup tartışıyoruz bu konuları ama ben bunu yaparken en azından vicdanım rahat oluyor. Ben en azından elimden geleni yaptım. Söylenmesi gerekeni söyledim. Tedbir almayan onlar, şartları iyileştirmeyen onlar. Benim içim rahat.(Ben sonuçta müfredatın ağır olduğunu yetiştiremediğimi, test kitabı alınması gerektiğini fakat bunun engellendiğini (vurgulu) bunları belirtiyorum. Hani değiştirip değiştirmemek onların ellerinde yani içim rahat ben elimden geleni söylüyorum ve yapıyorum. Şikâyetlerimi anlatıyorum) (p. 247).

Oq6: Zümre başkanım okulda. Yani bu bana ekstra bir külfet. Gidiyor toplantıya düşüncelerini söylüyor zümredeki arkadaşlarının sorunlarını anlatıyorsun, kendi yaşadığın sorunları anlatıyorsun. Tutanağı alıp okula getiriyorsun ve arkadaşlarına fotokopiyle çoğaltıp veriyorsun (p. 247).

Oq7: Komsumun kızı 100 üzerinde 30 almış. Ben sınav yaptım evde. Kendi hazırladığım sınav kâğıdını, aynı soruları sordum. 90 aldı. Öğretmenlerin sınav teknikleri, soru tercihleri birbirinde çok farklı olabiliyor (p. 209)

Oq8: Kendi kitabimizi asla seçemiyoruz. Milli Eğitim gönderir hepsini, Kitapların çoğu da zaten öğrencinin seviyesine uygun değil. Seviyenin çok çok üstünde ve genellikle gramer ve kelime ağırlıklı (p. 200).

Oq9: Okula gelen müfettişler ders kitapları kullanılıyor mu diye kontrol ediyor. Sınıfta gezerken rastgele öğrencilerin kitaplarına bakıyorlar. Üstüne yazılmış mı, karalanmış mı diye bakıyorlar. Yepyeni hiç kullanılmamış üstünde tek bir yazı bile yoksa bu sefer bizim başımız derde giriyor. Uyarı alıyoruz (p. 201).

Oq10: Yoklama kâğıdını imzalamak için katılıyoruz valla, ne yalan söyleyim (p. 236).

SERq1: Nedir mesela bir öğrenci matematikten 95-100 alıp da TEOG sınavında İngilizce 'den daha düşük bir not almışsa 60-65 gibi bunun sebebi nedir yani bu çocuğun acaba dil alanında bir yetersizliği mi var. Bu durum genelse o zaman öğretmen arkadaşlara diyoruz burada bir yanlışlık var. Öğretim yöntemlerimizi değerlendirmemiz lazım çünkü bariz ve net burada öğretmenden kaynaklı bir sorunun olduğu (...) Mesele geçen yıl bizim Teog sınavında en düşük ortalama İngilizce dersinden çıkmıştı yanlış hatırlamıyorsam o şekilde idi. Bu yıl farklı arkadaşlarla işte öğrencilere farklı materyaller dağıtarak sınav öncesinde

hazırlıklarla bunu biraz daha yukarıya çekildi yani 15% gibi yaklaşık bir artış oldu geçen yılın başarı puanıyla bu yılın TEOG başarı puanında (p. 213).

SERq2: Gerektiğinde zaten müfredatın dışına çıkabiliyor öğretmen. Gelecek senenin konularını bile öğretebilir ama öğretmen de zaten müfredat programının dışında çıkmayı çok da tercih etmiyor. Bu biraz da kendi tercihleridir diye düşünüyorum öğretmen arkadaşların konuyu dağıtmamak, yani ilerde bir belirsizliğe doğru gitmemek için genellikle müfredat programının pek dışına çıkmayı tercih etmezler. Zaten basari kriterlerimiz, hedeflerimiz var. Bunların dışına çıkması öğretmen için zaten boşuna caba göstermesidir (p. 215).

SERq3: Özellikle 8. Sınıflarda işte bir Teog çalışmamız var, bu nedenle zaten programa öğretmen bağlı kalmalı. TEOG sınavlarından dolayı işte Teog 'da çıkacak soruların dağılımına göre derslerinde hangi ders saatlerinde kaçar dersin hangi konuya ayrılacağına dair bir dağılım öğretmen arkadaşlara biz bunları tebliğ ederiz. Öğretmen arkadaşlar da zaten sınavdan önce bu soruları bitirmek zorundadırlar (p. 216)

SERq4: Bunlar [hangi sınıflarda kimin görev yapacağı] idareden idareye değişen şeyler. Siz okul içerisinde demokratik bir ortam oluşturmuşsanız ve öğretmenlere okul idaresinin haksızlık yapmayacağı yönünde bir güven sağlamışsanız genellikle bu sorun olmaz. Ama bazı okul idareleri bunun her zaman kendisinde olmasını ister ve kendisi belirler (p. 223).

SERq5: Çünkü o öğretmen arkadaşın bu dağılıma rıza göstermesi ve bundan memnun olması gerekir. Bunu sağlamak da benim görevim. Yoksa onun mutsuzluğu üzerine yapılan bir program zaten çok da fazla etkili olacağını

düşünmüyorum ben. Bu nedenle zaten öğretmenlerin bu tür konularda yönetime dâhil edilmesi gerekiyor (p. 223)

SERq6: Bu toplantıların amacı şimdi TEOG sonuçlarını değerlendirmek, öğrenci ihtiyaçlarını belirlemek ve başarısızlık söz konusuysa bunu nedenlerini araştırmak. Tabii her birini tek tek okunuyorlar. En son mesela okullardan Teoglarla ilgili görüşlerini talep ettik. 135 okuldan rapor geldi. Hepsini de tek tek okuduk ve kendimiz bir rapor hazırladık (p. 248).

ALq1: Şimdi müfredatın yetişmemesi gibi bir durumu düşündüğümüzde, yetişmemiştir neden yetişmemiştir. Bu araştırırız. (O dersler boş geçtiği için haliyle eğitim öğretim de belli bir zaman süreci içerisinde oluyor yani.) Sebep ne olursa olsun bu konular öğretilmek zorunda. (Yoksa o zamanı eğer öğretmen telafi edemezse konular eksik kalır tatbiki.) Ha okul idaresine ne yapacak? (Konuların eksik kaldığını belirtecek okul idaresine). Okul idaresi de ona ek ders diyelim yani böyle telafi eğitimi diyoruz biz buna, yani sen şu saatte şu günde öğrencilerini al gel. Cumartesi Pazar mesela dersleri telafi et diyoruz (p. 246)

ALq2: Bazı öğretmen vardır şehrinin öğretmeni. Bütün şehre hitap etmek ister. Dolayısıyla tamamen kişisel olan bir şeydir ama asıl söylenmesi gereken şudur. Bir öğretmen isterse şehrinin öğretmeni olabilir mi bu imkân var mı? İsterse okulunun öğretmeni olabilir mi bu imkân var mı? Evet. Yani tamamen sonuna kadar kapılar açık. Ama bazı öğretmen arkadaşlarımız maalesef sınıfın öğretmeni olmayı tercih ediyor, dahası olmuyor (p. 220).

ALq3: Yani mesela biz başarısızlığı başarıyı tartışıyoruz mesela bir gün. Şu sınıfta bir problem var mesela. Şu sınıfla ne yapalım dedik. Öğretmen de dedi ki her birimiz bir öğrenciyi alalım her birimiz bir öğrenciye rehberlik edelim. Dolayısıyla o sınıfın

tamamını kurtarmış oluruz. Madem bir sınıfa giren sınıf öğretmeni o sınıfla baş edemiyor. O zaman biz hepimiz o problemi paylaşalım. Dolayısıyla o problemi birlikte yok edelim. Gayet de güzel biz mesela şimdi paylaştık öğrencileri. Bir tane de bana verin dedin. Kaç öğrenci var; 25. 25 tane öğretmen bir öğrenciyi alıyor ve onun problemleriyle ilgileniyor. Yani ailevi problemi varsa onunla ilgilenecek veya çocuğun anlama ile ilgili problemi varsa onunla ilgilenecek. Araç gereçle ilgili problemi varsa onunla ilgilenecek arkadaşla ilgili problemi varsa onunla ilgilenecek. Okul fobisi varsa onunla ilgilenecek. Ders fobisi varsa onunla ilgilenecek ve bunun neticesinde ortaya bir neden çıkacak o nedenin de üzerine gidilecek ve o problem halledilecek. Böyle bir karar alabildik mesela (p. 230)

ALq4: Müfredatla ilgili sıkıntılar vardır mesela zaman zaman da milli eğitim bu sıkıntıları bulmak adına müfredat çalışması yapar (p. 239)

ALq5: İstişare etmek bizim dinimizde de çok önemlidir. Tıpkı ari kovanından bal çıkarmaya benzer. Her öğretmen bir bal kovanı gibidir. İstişare etmek de o kovandan balı çıkarmak gibidir. Ama öğretmenlerden alınan fikirlerin de uygulanabilirliği olmalı (p. 194).

ALq6: Akil akıldan üstündür. Biz öyle deriz bin bilsen de bir bilene sor. Bunlar bizim atasözlerimiz. Öğretmenlerin fikirlerini duymazdan gelmek, onların önüne engeller koymak kabul edilemez (p. 194)

ALq7: Toplantılarında, öğretmenler çok rahat bir şekilde görüşlerini bildirebilirler. Bu paylaşılan görüşler tabiki kurul tarafından değerlendirilir, eğer uygulanabiliyorsa da uygulanır (p. 230).

ALq8: Öğretmen istediği gibi dersini yapmakta, istediği tekniği kullanmakta özgür. Bir öğretmen arkadaşımız vardı. Öğrencilere demiş iste sınıfa yiyecekler getirmişler bin bir türlü. Bunların üstüne İngilizce etiketler yapıştırmışlar. Bence çok etkili bir metot (p. 205)

AHq1: Bazı öğretmenlerin gerçekten lider olma özelliklerini taşıyorlar. Hem okullarda aldıkları görevlerle olsun, yaptıkları icraatlarla olsun. Bu arkadaşlarımı kurum içinde arkadaşları sürükleyecek bir kültür sevgi saygı ortamı oluşturabiliyorlarsa kalıcı bir kültür bırakabiliyor okulda. (...)kendileri o okuldan daha sonra ayrılırlar bile bu kültürü başka bir okula taşıyorlar. [Onun için eğitim liderlerinin hakikaten özellikle istekli arzulu okulu sürükleyebilecek değiştirebilecek hatta kendi öğretmen arkadaşlarını değil yöneticilerde dâhil olmak üzere iyiye doğru yönlendirerek götördükleri örnekleri görüyorum şahsen] (p. 219)

EDq1: Bunun önemine inanmıyorlar, kendini gerçekleştiren kehanet. Nasıl olsa biz desek de demesek de bizim söylediğimiz uygulanmayacak seklinde bir inanışları var. Ekstra zaman kaybı ve angarya olarak görüyorlar. Görev tanımlarında olan bir is olarak görmüyorlar (p. 220).

EDq2: Mesela öğretmenler hangi alanlarda kendinizi yetiştirmeye ihtiyaç duyuyorsunuz seklinde bir anket ya da bir veri istediğimizde öğretmen arkadaşlarımız istedikleri alanları belirlemekte ancak MEB teşkilatı olarak şartlara bakarak onların istekleriyle uyumlu kararlar alamıyoruz. İsimize kolay geliyor. Örneğin bir eğitim öğretmenler planlamış. Ben orda bana bir akademisyen desteği lazım. İsi doğru yapmak gerekirse örneğin Ankara'dan bir uzaman bir akademisyen getirmem gerekiyor. Ama onu getirmek ayrı bir külfet prosedürüyle uğraşmamak

adına onu yerine buradaki mevcut akademisyenlerle bir eğitim hazırlayarak öğretmenlerin isteğini dikkate almayabiliyorum (p. 235)

EDq3: Yaklaşık 20 tane hizmetçi eğitim enstitümüz var. Örneğin temel eğitim müdürlüğüne bakalım. Altta su an aktif olarak 6 tane kurs var farklı illerde. İlçemizden sadece 1 kişi başvurmuş. (...) Haberdar olmamaları mümkün değil. Çünkü öğretmenlerle ilgili tüm iletişim buradan devam eder. Hatta biz öğretmenlerimiz acaba ailelerinden ayrılıp gidemiyorlar mı vakit bulamıyorlar mı sorusuna karşılıklı söyle bir uygulama yaptık uzaktan eğitim (p. 238).

EDq4: Hizmetçi eğitim faaliyetlerinin aynı zamanda öğretmenlerin kişisel gelişimlerini sağlarken bir de öğretmenlere etkinlik olarak fayda sağlaması gerekiyor. (Nedir mesela bir hizmetçi eğitime katılan öğretmen bu katıldığı eğitimin belgesiyle doğru orantılı olarak ya özlük haklarına maaşlarına ya da hizmet puanlarına atamalarına bir etkisi olması gerekiyor. Bizim sistemimizde şuan bu yok.)Öğretmene ilave bir katkı katmıyor. Sadece kişisel gelişim olarak. Teşvik yok Türkiye’de maalesef (p. 238)

Eq1: Bizim ilçe milli eğitim müdürlüğünde raporları mümkün olduğunca okumaya çalışıyoruz (p. 249).

HUq1: Öğrencilerin öğretmenin yaptığı sınavlardan daha yüksek, teogda ise daha düşük notlar aldığı durumlarla karşılaştık (p. 211).

HUq2: öğretmenleri çok da dâhil etmiyoruz bu mevzulara. Zaten bir zümre toplantısına katılmak bile öğretmenin zoruna gidiyor (p. 221).